

# **Teachers' perceptions of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in Namibia**

by

**Eugene Litaba Maemeko**

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' perception(s) of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in Namibia. The study employed a case study involving two school principals, two heads of department (HODs) and five teachers. Interviews were used to collect the data. The study found that almost all teachers acknowledge the importance of the PIs and believe that they succeed in improving the provision of quality education if they are properly implemented. The study also found that both school principals experience many challenges with the implementation of these PIs. The analysis was framed by interpretive theory as the study is exploratory. Performance indicators (PIs) have become the yardstick by which internal and external school evaluators can assess whole school performance.

The focus of this case study was on Grade 10 school performance in the Katima Mulilo rural circuit and an urban secondary school in the Caprivi education region of Namibia. Grade 10 is one of the school levels in which low academic performance has been found to be common in the Caprivi region. The study included a literature review of studies on performance indicators in different parts of the world.

## **Key Concepts**

Performance indicators, standards, school improvement, school effectiveness, school development, rural secondary school, urban secondary school, interpretive theory.

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- My dear wife and friend, Ronnah, and our children, Keith, Ashley and Ethane for supporting me during my research journey, to you all I say thank you. Without you, this research would not have been completed.

## **Dedication**

I wish to dedicate this thesis to my late mother, Madam Mukena Grace Ngaluka, who inspired me all through my childhood until I was an adult. To you Ma I say, thank you.

## Declaration

I declare that the thesis titled **‘Teachers’ perceptions of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in Namibia’** is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

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Eugene Litaba Maemeko

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December 2014

## **List of Acronyms**

ATs	-	Advisory Teachers
HOD	-	Head of Department
IoE	-	Inspector of Education
PIs	-	Performance Indicators
SDP	-	School Development Plan
SSE	-	School Self-Evaluation
TSE	-	Teachers Self-Evaluation
PAAI	-	Plan of Action for Academic Improvement

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

## 1.1. Introduction

This thesis presents a case study of teachers' perception of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in two Katima Mulilo circuit secondary schools in the Caprivi education region of Namibia. This chapter investigates the historical background of school performance and development in Namibia, the main purpose of the study, the rationale for the study, the main question and sub-questions, conceptual and theoretical frameworks, literature review and research methodology and design.

## 1.2. Background to the study

The total number of schools in Namibia increased from 1435 in 1996 to 1584 in 2002 (MBESC, 2002). This increase in the number of schools shows Namibia's commitment towards the realisation of its goal for education for all children (EMIS, 2005). However, this goal has not been reached in full as poor academic performance is still a problem in all grades in Namibia (EMIS, 2005). The Katima Mulilo circuit, from which two secondary schools were selected for this study, is found in the Caprivi education region of Namibia. The Caprivi education region is one of the eight educational regions in Namibia, situated in the far north-east of the country. However, the process of upgrading formerly disadvantaged schools has been going on for the past twenty years, and still, learner performance in some schools as measured by their examination results leaves much to be desired (Nekaro, 2001:3).

Before independence in 1990, few children went to school in Namibia. Of those who did, many did not get far with their schooling. Initially, education for Black Namibians (Africans and Coloureds) was mainly aimed at preparing them for domestic and vocational jobs (Nekaro, 2001). Education was mainly to prepare people for menial or low-level jobs that the Germans and the South Africans required, except for a very small number of people who became messengers, clerks and other functionaries in the administrative system. Basic literacy and numeracy was considered sufficient. Over time, a few Namibians managed to secure more advanced education, often in

mission schools or schools outside the country (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:2).

Although Black Namibians were kept from achieving better education by their colonial masters, a different pattern began to emerge gradually with regard to educational provision for the different ethnic groupings. Initially, Namibians received some form of education within their different homelands. Colonialists trained indigenous Namibians only to a level that suited their own colonial needs. Namibians were educated in accordance with their future role as labourers. Secondly, Coloureds, who were mainly offspring of German fathers and Black mothers, were treated as superior to Blacks because of their White heritage and therefore, were treated differently from Blacks in respect to education provision. The provision of education to Coloureds and Blacks was the responsibility of various missionary societies operating in the region. Lastly, White settlers feared that their children would sink to a more primitive level of civilisation if they received the same education as what was provided to indigenous people (Blacks). As a way of saving their children from this situation, schools for Whites served to reproduce a German schooling system that enjoyed both missionary and active government involvement. This was a deliberate attempt by the White settlers to make education for Whites superior to that of Blacks and Coloureds (Nekaro, 2001:4). In 1915, the South Africans gained government control of South West Africa (SWA), now Namibia, and inherited the educational arrangements of the former German colony. The inherited educational system fitted the aims and policies of the South African government so well that they not only maintained it, but also gradually intensified the system of segregated education (Cohen, 1994).

In order to make the colonial government's policy of separate education more effective, the South African government divided Namibia into homelands on the basis of ethnic groupings. The separate Windhoek-based structures for Whites, Coloureds and Blacks administered the educational concerns of the respective ethnic groups. In 1973, legislation was passed that granted self-governance to the Caprivi region as a province. Katima Mulilo became its capital and administrative centre. The homeland administration was intended to take control over administration and supervision of education and related matters (Cohen, 1994).

Education under the jurisdiction of the Caprivi homeland administration was characterised by a shortage of classrooms, funds, equipment, books and qualified teachers, among others. Schooling was conducted in the most appalling conditions and this resulted in a large scale failure and dropout rate in schools during this administration. Nevertheless, the independence of Namibia in 1990 brought a new vision for education in Namibia. Policy makers generally believed that the historically uneven and unequal distribution of educational resources among communities and schools resulted in differential achievement rates across communities, schools and learners (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1992). In order to redress the situation, schools that fell under different ethnic administrations were now placed under the control of one ministry of education and culture. All these efforts were geared towards improving the learning environment for historically disadvantaged schools through strengthening of the staff, supply of library facilities and textbooks, and administrative and supervisory services, because these play an important role in ensuring a quality education for all (Angula, 1990).

### **1.3. Rationale for the study**

I have worked as a teacher in the Caprivi education region of Namibia for about 15 years. This has given me some experience of the variations in the schools' performance when it comes to grade 10 final examinations and has influenced me to engage in a study that would contribute towards a better understanding of the problem. This study explores whether or not performance indicators can influence academic performance and teacher motivation at Grade 10 level in two secondary schools. It has enabled me to contribute towards a fuller and deeper insight into the problem in the selected schools and grades. The study included both rural and urban settings by focusing two Katima Mulilo circuit secondary schools in the Caprivi education region of Namibia.

According to Hulpia and Valcke (2004), school improvement is a dynamic, planned and rational change process with structural and cultural aspects. School improvement is a process that is planned along three stages, namely initiation, implementation and institutionalisation. Archer, Scherman, Coe and Howie, (2010:77) also feel that monitoring school and learner achievement is an essential part of establishing praxis for school improvement.

This especially centres on changing the conditions of learning and related internal conditions in schools. Its goal is the more effective realisation of educational goals. It is necessary for an organisation or school to identify its Key Performance Indicators (KPI). A school might consider the failure rate of its students as a Key Performance Indicator, which might help the school understand its position in the education community. Research on the role of vision in academic school performance that conducted in the UK indicates that the individual marks of a nation-wide standard examination in grade 4 were used as the outcomes measurement for academic school performance (Diran, Zhang, KeGoh, Young, Lee and Saw, 2010:18). A business, on the other hand, might consider the percentage of income from return customers as a potential KPI. According to Peim and Flint (2008:346):

The national drive towards excellence and equity is directly related to standards. Such standards are determined through the assessments that furnish the ground for comparative evaluations of performance and potential.

However, in comparison to business educational development is an on-going process that wants to see change in school performance, but on a more gradual, holistic and measurable way (Akhavan, 2004). Although these concepts may appear similar, they mean different things. The ultimate goals are similar though. They are deliberately explained in this chapter as they are central to this study. When it comes to the idea of educational development, the Ministry of Education (MEC) (1993:18) in Namibia states: "To achieve and sustain development, it is necessary to ensure the education and training of the people so that they can participate fully and effectively in the development process." Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:41) also share similar views when they state:

Our particular understanding of schools as an organisation rests on a belief that development of the organisation is not only possible, but is a necessary aspect of integrated school life. The importance of schools engaging in organisation development processes is underlined by our understanding of processes of change. Very often, we think about educational change, we think of changes that teachers need to make in their classroom settings - using new (and more interesting and relevant) materials, developing new teaching methodologies and possibly also changing old attitudes and values and developing new ones which suit the new approaches mentioned above.

We cannot develop an organisation (school) without developing the people who work in the school, thus professional human resource development is seen as a necessary aspect of organisation development (Davidoff & Lazarus, 1997:41).

Dalin and Rust (1983:22) describe organisation development by saying:

It is a self-correcting, self-renewing process, undertaken by the members of an organisation, although external support usually exists in the form of consultants or self-assessment instruments.

When we look at school organisation development, we need to take into account the particular and central purpose of schools. It is about learning and all strategies used to facilitate learning. The curriculum and curriculum development give the school its particular nature, and are therefore intricately linked to the organisational development of the school (Davidoff & Lazarus, 1997:43). The types of strategies used in organisation development include the following: Person-centred strategies that take the form of educational interventions, including staff, student and parent development; structural change strategies that tend to concentrate on changing structural aspects of the school itself, for example management structures and processes, regulation and policy; and codes of conduct (also included here would be structural aspects relating to the environment within the broader context in which the school operates). In addition, Davidoff and Lazarus (1997) state that in developing schools, there are five strategies that embrace some aspects of school development, and these include:

- Building school policies that support health and well-being;
- Creating safe and supportive teaching and learning environments that include the promotion of human rights;
- Strengthening community action and participation through enhancing and expanding the relationship between schools and the community;
- Promoting the personal skills of members of the school community through health and life skills education and encouragement of healthy, physical activity and recreation;

- Promoting access to and re-orientating education support services towards an accessible, integrated, systemic, preventative and health promotive approach, with a particular focus on reducing the numbers of learners experiencing barriers to learning and development and addressing factors that place learners at risk.

The most important person in any school is the learner (Dalín, 1998). What could be more natural than a learner actively participating in the development of the school, or to state it differently, in the development of their own workplace? In another context, Dalín, Rolff and Kleekamp point out that working with the unknown, being a part of developing one's own workplace and the institution one lives with, can be one of the most important means of preparing for the future (Dalín 1998:205; Rolff & Kleekamp, 1993). Dalín (1998: 205) feels that for schools to develop from within, those who work in them must know themselves and their organisation. Experience has shown that teachers often know little about each other. Teachers seldom speak out about what they stand for. Teachers and learners rarely have such a good dialogue among themselves that they can constructively improve the climate and the teaching.

While school development, improvement, school effectiveness and change all may want to achieve one thing in the end, they may achieve it in different ways as they show some kind of differences and similarities at times. For example, school effectiveness departs from premise of the measurement of outcomes and quantifying differences between schools (Harris 1999:8). It differs from school improvement in its concentration on a very limited range of outcomes. The concept of school effectiveness is closely related to a means-end relationship. In school effectiveness research, the central aim is to judge whether differences in resources, process and organisational arrangements affect learner outcomes and, if so, in what way. The impetus to improve school performance and to raise standards has contributed to the prominence of both research fields in the international research community (Harris, 1999:7). The dual levers of accountability and market competition operating in many Western countries have forced schools to seek ways of becoming effective and of improving their performance. In an effort to achieve this, both educators and researchers have sought answers to two fundamental questions: "What do effective schools look like?" and "How do schools improve and become more effective?"



According to Moloi, Dzvimbo, Potgieter, Wolhuter and Van der Walt (2010:477), a number of studies on effective schools have revealed that the classroom level is more influential than the school level in terms of the performance of learners. Furthermore, in the UK the seminar research by Rutter (1979:7) demonstrates that schools can do much to foster good behaviour and attainment and that even in a disadvantaged area, “schools can be a force for good”. This study found that effective schools are characterised by the degree of academic emphasis, teacher actions in lessons, the availability of incentives and rewards and good conditions for learners. Onderi and Croll (2010) feel that the quality of leadership provided by the school principal, which is one of the central features of school effectiveness outcomes, seems to apply across a variety of educational systems.

Nuttall (1990) notes that some schools are more effective in raising the achievement levels of students with high entry requirements than those with low at entry requirements. However, it is important to recognise that school effectiveness is a relative term that is dependent on time, outcomes and student group (Harris, 1999). School effectiveness has assisted in demonstrating that schools do make a difference and has helped destroy the belief that schools can do little to change the society around them. At the heart of the effective schools movement is an attack on sociological determinism and individualistic theories about learning.

School effectiveness studies have continuously shown that effective schools are structurally, symbolically and culturally more tightly linked than less effective ones. They operate more as an organic whole and less as a loose collection of disparate sub-systems. School effectiveness efforts embody the core principles of the self-renewing school, where change and development are owned by the school rather than imposed from outside (Hopkins, 1996). School improvement as an approach to school self-renewal rests on a number of assumptions. These include the belief that schools have the capacity to improve themselves, that school improvement involves cultural change and that this is best achieved by working on the internal conditions of each individual school. In the final analysis, it is the quality of teacher-learner interactions that determines learner progress (Moloi et al., 2010:477). Similar ideas can be found in Ntuta (2010:1), who states that “unless efforts are directed squarely towards reform within the classroom, improvement in student outcomes will not

occur". Anthony (2010:24) also feels that "students' academic learning occurs principally in classrooms as students interact with teachers around subject matter".

#### **1.4. School-effectiveness approach**

School effectiveness has been the focus of much controversy and criticism (Elliot, 1996). School effectiveness research adheres to conservative values and encourages a view of school failure that blames the school and the teachers (Elliot, 1996). For example, Morley and Rasol (1999) refer to schools and teachers as good or bad, effective or failing.

"Educational success has been reduced to factors that can be measured" (Elliot, 1996). Furthermore, Morley and Rasol (1999) propose that school effectiveness is located within a technical-rationalist framework that reflects a discourse of failure and an obsession with performance. Also, they contend that school effectiveness research is based on an ideology of social control and takes a narrowly mechanistic view of education as a process. Whatever position one takes in this latest debate, it is clear that the field has some limitations that have been readily acknowledged (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000). School effectiveness research assumes that schools are rational, goal-oriented systems in which goals are clear and agreed upon, that these relate to student achievement and that these achievements are measurable. The school effectiveness research tradition is therefore strongly normative. It focuses primarily on the structural and technical aspects of the organisation and neglects the process or cultural dimensions. Teddlie and Reynolds (2000) suggest that school effectiveness studies offer a snapshot of a school rather than a moving picture. Given the dynamic and evolving nature of schools as organisations, this snapshot approach has limited usefulness for informing school development or improvement (Gray et al, 1996). School effectiveness work has tended to neglect conditions outside the school and conditions on other levels within the organisation that contribute to overall effectiveness. The rise of a performativity discourse in education, especially in England, emanates from the importation of an economic market structure for schools to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the outputs of learning and to increase the opportunity of choice for the consumers of education (Jeffrey, 2002).

### **1.5. Towards a possible merger: possibility for collaboration**

While school effectiveness and school improvement research are very different in their core conceptualisations, beliefs and theoretical orientations, there is evidence to suggest that their interests have started to converge. Reynolds (2000) suggests that in the 1990s a number of projects emerged that borrowed from both the school effectiveness and school improvement literature. Projects such as the Improving the Quality of Education for All (IQEFA) in the UK, the Barclay Calvert Project in the USA and the Halton Project in Canada are cited as examples of a successful blending of school effectiveness and school improvement research. They argue that these initiatives open the way for a new wave of programmes that combine aspects of school effectiveness and school improvement research in ways appropriate to context, effectiveness level, culture, capacity for improvement and personal characteristics of staff employed at each school (Reynolds and Creemer, 2000:231).

While this optimism is to be welcomed, the challenge remaining for both fields is to seek ways to further collaborate and combine their respective research efforts. Although the related fields of school effectiveness and school improvement are still in need of further research to consolidate their growing linkages, there are shared areas for future research and development. These areas provide an agenda for future collaboration and offer the potential to cross the methodological and theoretical divide. The opportunities for closer collaboration between the two fields include the following: developing theory, taking a multilevel approach, taking account of context, generating case studies and using multiple outcomes measures (Harris, 1999: 17).

In contrast to school effectiveness, school improvement researchers have concentrated their efforts on the cultural dimensions of schooling (Harris, 1999: 12). They have focused their attention on the process of school level change and the improvement strategies necessary to achieve such change. Their stance has been one of development with an emphasis on process measures rather than achievement outcomes. Hopkins (1996) suggests that there are two senses in which the term school improvement is generally used. The first is the common sense meaning which relates to general efforts to make schools better places for learners and students to learn. The second is a more technical or specific definition in which

Hopkins defines school improvement as a strategy for educational change that enhances student outcomes and strengthens the school's capacity for managing change (Hopkins, 1996). Harris (1999) feels that a school is a centre of change and this means that external reforms should be sensitive to the situation in individual schools, rather than to assume that all schools are the same. When the school is regarded as the centre of change, then strategies for change need to take this new perspective into account. It also implies that school improvement efforts need to adopt a "classroom- exceeding" perspective, without ignoring the classroom.

Research on school improvement and development has shown that the two are inseparable and indispensable as they complement one another. Indicators relate more with school improvement, because there is evidence that schools that have performance indicators such as monitoring performance, introducing extra classes and changing examination boards, show much improvement in their results (David, 2001:22). Jeffrey (2002) feels that the performativity discourse prioritises the pursuit of excellence and accountability by focussing on the satisfaction to be gained from the achievement of goals and improvements in performance. Researchers such as Jeffrey (2002), Akhavan (2004), Harris (1999) and Creemers (1995) believe that indicators are a valuable base to direct quality improvement of schools. Hulpia and Valcke (2004) conclude that paying attention to performance indices as part of the school culture can result in improved performance. Pupil achievement and performance data should be used as a springboard for action. Effective schools are actively interested in how well they are doing, and seek evaluative data to monitor and improve their progress. David et al (2001) highlight some indicators that Namibia (especially in the previously disadvantaged schools I am working in) can adopt:

- Context specificity -Schools need both specific help based on their individual needs, and help in common with other schools.
- Classroom teaching and learning should be the lever that improves children's and schools' performance.
- There is much evidence of the need for an enhanced capacity in schools to promote the possibility of development and transfer of good practice.

- The right to access to the full curriculum for all pupils.
- The requirement for approved schemes of work.
- A policy of assessment, recording and reporting.

## **1.6. Research questions**

The following were the guiding questions in relation to the main purpose of the study.

### **1.6.1 The main research question**

The main research question in this study is:

What are teachers' perception(s) of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in Namibia?

### **1.6.2 Sub-questions**

In an effort to answer the main question, the following sub-questions are also posed:

- Are the indicators and standards realistic according to the teachers' perceptions?
- Do the indicators motivate teachers to improve or develop?
- Do teachers really feel that the indicators assist them to improve or develop?

### **1.6.3 Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of this study was to determine teachers' perception(s) of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in Namibia.

## **1.7. Conceptualisation of performance indicators for school improvement**

Performance indicators summarise statistical data about the quality of an institute or system (Goldstein & Spiegelhalter, 1996). Educational performance indicators provide information about the current performance of a system to suggest whether good progress is being made and to caution about observed problem issues (Hulpe

& Valcke, 2004). According to Bertzeletou and Stavrou (1997), indicators serve three basic functions. The first function is that of measurement to undertake analysis, assessment, monitoring or evaluation of the quality of individual schools and education in general. The second purpose of indicators is communication. Indicators help to inform relevant stakeholders or society about the state or development of a particular educational system. Finally, indicators can be used for normative or standardisation purposes.

Smith (2001) comes to the conclusion that indicators play a role in improving the performance of schools as they can be used to assess a school's performance, and to indicate whether changes are necessary and/or to assess whether changes result in improved performance. In conclusion, indicators can lead to powerful opportunities for individual schools to analyse and improve their educational quality. Hawley (2007:33) feels that in order to establish high expectations for all students, effective schools use common standards, but also different instructional approaches that respond to students' unique backgrounds and interests. Standards should set goals that students can visualise accomplishing through their own actions, and should provide feedback to students about a specific piece of work so that they can then revise to bring their work up to standard (Hawley, 2007:33). Akhavan (2004:46) shares similar sentiments when he points out that:

Standards are a place to stand on, solid foundations on which to build a successful curriculum and literacy program that teaches children in ways that ensure their academic success. Effective standards are also goals for students to meet in order to be proficient in reading, writing and maths.

Standards are about instruction. Good standards explicitly state what students would know and be able to do. They help us to visualise performance or action in the classroom. In other words, a well-written standard would say: "By the end of the school year, we expect second grade students to be able to read independently, aloud, from unfamiliar level L books". However, unless standards are linked to assessments, the standards become little more than window dressing or empty ideas, so standards must point at something concrete.

### **1.7.1 Where do these indicators come from?**

The performance indicators that are in use in Namibia originated from first world countries such as the United States of America, Australia and so forth. Indicators are an evolution of the earlier Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), which was largely rejected in the United States as unworkable in the 1990s. Its original model, which has been met with large scale failures, attempted to completely change the structure of education and grading by massively individualising instruction (<http://www.cepioline.org/policy>). On performance indicators' origin, Jeffrey (2002) states:

Performativity discourse began to be developed in primary schools after the introduction of the National Curriculum in England and Wales in 1989. Children's competencies were assessed in a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding of each curriculum subject and then they were allocated overall level age-related grading. The introduction of national standardised assessment tasks (SATs) in which children aged seven and eleven were assessed in English, maths and science soon followed.

Individual results were passed on to parents, but the overall school results were published in the form of league tables comprising schools and local education authorities in local and national newspapers. The education system in Namibia, especially during the colonial period, followed the prescriptions of developed countries. The Cape Education Department in South Africa was the custodian of the Namibian education system until independence in 1990, when the British Cambridge system was adopted. So, when we talk of indicators, we are not talking of a Namibian breed, but an infusion of already failed indicators from other parts of the world. We thus need a strong education system that will see us through and improve our situation.

### **1.8. Research design and methodology**

While some elements of a quantitative research methodology may be observed, this study will be mainly qualitative. The choice of this research approach was carefully planned to obtain data that would answer the research problem satisfactorily (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001). In my search for a suitable approach,

methodology and methods to use in this study, I was guided by factors such as the purpose of the study, the research questions, the kind of questions I was seeking answers to, the methods of collecting and analysing data and the population size of the study (Opie, 2004; McMillan and Schumacher, 2001). This section therefore involves the discussion of the research approach and method, theoretical framework, data gathering tools, data analysis strategies and the sample that was used in the study. It also discusses some possible limitations of the study and how ethical issues were considered.

### **1.9. Limitations**

The study was limited to Grade 10 classes in two secondary schools of the Katima Mulilo cluster of Katima Mulilo circuit because of time and financial constraints. There is a need for future studies into all the grades/clusters or the whole region or country if we want to gain a fuller understanding of the performance indicators for the academic improvement of all the grades in all schools. Since the study was of a qualitative nature and might omit other aspects of the problem, such as the generalizability of the findings. There is thus a need for future studies to explore this problem in this study location quantitatively.

### **1.10. Conclusion**

Chapter 1 of the thesis served as an introduction to the study. An analysis of the literature reviewed in the study is presented in Chapter 2. The focus of the discussion in Chapter 3 is on the study methodology and design. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study. Chapter 5 offers conclusions and recommendations regarding the findings in this study.

Reform in education is a continuous process of improvement to meet the needs of our dynamic society. Thus, principals, education officers as instructional leaders should nurture these PI policies for the success of our educational institutions.



## **CHAPTER 2: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TEACHER MOTIVATION**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The implementation of performance indicators (PIs) signals a period of fundamental change. As stakeholders in education, principals, heads of department and teachers in this new 'era of change' require the ability to envision an improved school and the spark to energise and lead staff to bring it about.

This chapter offers a literature review focusing on teachers' perceptions of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in Namibia. The discussion includes a conceptualisation of performance indicators and school improvement as these are central to this study. The purpose of indicators are highlighted throughout and finally linked to motivation. The main research question on which the chapter focuses is what teachers' perceptions of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in Namibia are and how these link to motivation?

The post-independence Namibian education system has been characterised by many reform initiatives, aimed at eradicating inequity, poor performance, and inferior education provision inherited from a pre-independence education system. This legacy posed a serious challenge to Namibia when it set out to achieve a national goal, Vision 2030. Vision 2030 inspires Namibia to be among the developed countries in 2030 (Johannes, 2009:2). In an attempt to achieve the goals outlined by the mission statement of Vision 2030, the Ministry of Education introduced two national education initiatives: the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP), and the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPIs). These would be implemented in Namibian schools as the ministry's strategic plan and the department's policy document (Johannes, 2009:2).

### **2.2 An overview of the performance indicators**

The PIs were introduced to address the fragmentation of informal standards that existed in regions and schools in Namibia, but these standards were not specifically

defined (MoE, 2005a:1). They aimed to enhance common standards across the country and to improve the quality of education at a national level (MoE, 2005a:1). The dicta of the NSPIs call for all schools to take quality assurance seriously, with particular emphasis on School self-evaluation (SSE), a process that encourages self-management (MoE, 2007a:3). The NSPIs are thus used by internal and external school evaluators to assess whole school performance. In order to familiarise staff members with the NSPIs, inspectors of education (IoEs) and advisory teachers (ATs) from the Caprivi region received training in 2005 before the NSPIs were to be implemented in schools in 2006 (MoE, 2005a:6). Thereafter, the cascade model of training was adopted for the remaining IoEs, ATs and principals. The policy laid out by the NSPIs identifies seven key areas and 111 themes (or aspects) of school life, and provides evaluators with 29 PIs (MoE, 2005a:1). Taken together, the 111 themes are regarded as forming a holistic representation, and so the assumption is that everything traditionally associated with the concept of school life is covered by the NSPIs (Johannes, 2009:8). Therefore, the conclusion drawn is that if schools implement the prescriptions contained in the NSPIs, school performance is likely to improve, and Namibia will be able to provide quality education for her citizens, the ultimate goal of the Ministry of Education (MoE, 2005a:1).

Furthermore, principals benefited a great deal from the NSPIs, because they were given the means to review the work of their own schools, to identify weaknesses and to rectify them (Johannes, 2009:8). Similarly, the NSPIs are of value to external school evaluators. The PIs provide specific and common criteria for measuring school performance. According to the NSPI policy, “because both the school staff and those external to the school share the PIs, they should improve the focus and quality of dialogue between the various parties” (MoE, 2005a:1). There are key areas for each indicator and these are also subdivided into a number of themes/aspects of school (MoE, 2005a:2). The NSPI policy requires both internal and external evaluators to use a four-point scale when assessing themes. As the policy explains, “in each PI illustrations are given in words of excellent performance (Level 4) in that part of the work of a school, and of a performance that shows more weaknesses than strengths” (MoE, 2005a:2). According to the NSPIs, all schools in Namibia are required to conduct an annual self-evaluation, starting on the 15th October, and reaching completion before the middle of November (MoE, 2007b: 2). The

framework of this evaluation is given by a National Standards tool called School self-evaluation (SSE). The guidelines of the SSEs closely resemble that of the NSPIs in that all key areas, PIs and themes appear exactly as they do in the NSPI policy, but in a more detailed form. The SSE was designed as an instrument to be used by all schools in Namibia, as the MoE states:

All schools in Namibia need to aim to become a level 4 school according to the standards set in the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPI). The SSE will assist management and the staff in evaluating the school's overall performance improvement over a period of one year (MoE, 2007b:2).

According to the NSPI policy, teachers are also required to conduct self-evaluations by using an instrument of similar design to the SSEs, known as Teacher self-evaluation, or TSE (MoE, 2007b:10-13). The precepts of the TSE indicate what is expected of a teacher in Namibia, and the department calls on teachers to conduct self-evaluations in an honest manner. Other tools available to schools include the School Development Plan (SDP), the Plan of Action for Academic Improvement (PAAI), and Classroom Observation Instrument (COI) for promotional subjects, lower primary education and non-promotional subjects (MoE, 2007b:10-11).

Another apparatus worth mentioning at this point is that Namibian schools are required by the Education Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) to set annual performance targets before the end of January each year. All of these tools, designed to aid in improving the overall quality of education in Namibian schools, are part of the implementation of the NSPIs. These tools will be referred to frequently during the course of this study. The policy structure of the PIs is comprehensive and complex, and it makes principals chiefly responsible for the success of its implementation. Effective implementation of the policy in schools requires significant managerial and leadership skills on the part of school principals. Therefore, the success of the PIs' policy in schools, in my view, depends on whether Namibian principals have developed the requisite leadership and management skills while at college or university, or during their in-service training.

The following table shows the 7 Key Areas and 29 PIs. The content covered by the policy of the PIs is comprehensive, so familiarity with its themes is essential for

effective implementation and for the way its implementation is perceived and experienced by school principals in Namibia.

7 Key areas of the PIs	29 Performance Indicators (PIs)
1. Provision of resources for the school and hostel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of human resources</li> <li>• Provision of physical resources</li> <li>• Provision of finance</li> <li>• Provision of resources for hostel</li> </ul>
2. Curriculum and attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the curriculum</li> <li>• extra-curricular activities</li> <li>• Intellectual attainment</li> <li>• Personal and social development</li> </ul>
3. Teaching and learning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of the teaching process</li> <li>• Suitability to learners' needs</li> <li>• Quality of the learning process</li> <li>• Assessment and evaluation</li> </ul>
4. The school as a social unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morale of the school</li> <li>• Effective use of time</li> <li>• Values and norms</li> <li>• Pastoral care and guidance</li> <li>• Curricular and vocational guidance</li> <li>• School discipline</li> </ul>
5. Management and leadership of the school and hostel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy, planning and implementation</li> <li>• Curriculum and attainment</li> <li>• Administration</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Management of staff</li> <li>• Management of physical resources</li> <li>• Management of finance</li> </ul>
6. Links with parents and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links with parents</li> <li>• Links with the community</li> </ul>
7. Links with other schools and the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of resources for work with cluster</li> <li>• Effectiveness of cluster activities</li> <li>• Effectiveness of links with the region</li> </ul>

Source: (Namibia. MoE, 2005a:8-10)

## 2.3 Theoretical conceptualisation of PIs and school improvement

This section explains how different researchers conceptualise the concepts *performance indicators* and *school improvement*. The conceptualisation of a concept refers to how scholars understand and interpret a particular concept (performance indicators and school improvement in this case) within a particular context, hence the different conceptualisations by various studies done in different locations and under different circumstances.

### 2.3.1 Performance indicators

Different authors conceptualise the concept of performance indicators differently, although they agree on some points. Hulpia and Valcke (2004) as well as Berzeletou and Stavrou (1997) observe that performance indicators describe and analyse key aspects of schooling and help to evaluate and monitor the quality of education. Furthermore, indicators provide an at-a-glance indication of current conditions and may augur future prospects. Cloete and Bunting (2004) define an indicator as a measure, usually in a quantitative form, of an aspect of an activity of a higher education institution. The measure may be ordinal or cardinal, absolute or comparative. It thus includes the mechanical applications of formulae and can inform or derived from such informal subjective procedures as peer evaluations or reputational rankings. Indicators have a strong purpose in Namibian schools and the education system at large, as Akhavan (2004) observes:

Indicators are a place to stand on, a solid foundation on which to build a successful curriculum and literacy program that teaches children in ways that ensure their academic success. Effective indicators are also goals for students to meet in order to be proficient in reading, writing and maths.

Jeffrey (2002) share similar sentiments when he contends that performance indicators act mainly as a form of accountability, particularly related to a systems approach that incorporates an input-output model. He feels that the performance management discourse prioritises the pursuit of excellence and accountability by focusing on the satisfaction to be gained from the achievement of goals and improvements in performance. Indicators for school improvement define the elements of whole school improvement which schools can put into effect at the

elementary, middle and high school levels in order to produce the desired learning results. In the modern climate of high-stakes testing and educational accountability, the success of a school is measured by the school's achievement of set performance indicators. A performance indicator has to point to the intended or planned consequences of the functioning of a system. It has to measure the performance of a system by assessing the extent to which the system has succeeded in achieving or realising explicit national goals (Coete & Bunting, 2004:3). Schools are not just following goals from the central government, but regionally and locally, schools are allowed to set their own standards to measure themselves by. Though we are talking about national indicators, schools in the Caprivi region had set themselves performance indicators for things such as the pass rate, the level of discipline, achievements in extramural activities and others. It is not quite possible or fair to have one-size-fits-all PIs, as the size and developmental level of the region, as well as how well resourced schools in the urban areas are compared to those in townships, should be taken into consideration. The idea of PI is originally a business concept, but has been infused into education because of the restructuring and international pressures endured over the years from capitalists and compliant governments (Hill, 2003:1).

### **2.3.2 School improvement**

According to Sibeya (2002), school improvement is directly related to school change processes, and improvement is the ultimate goal of the change process, that is, it aims at improving the situation in the school for the school to perform at its best. Moreover, Creemers (1995) defines school improvement as all theories and studies concerning strategies for educational change that enhance student outcomes, as well as strengthening the school's capacity for managing change. Hulpia and Valcke (2004) agree with Creemers by defining school improvement as a dynamic, planned and rational change process with structural and cultural aspects that are planned along processes of initiation, implementation and institutionalisation. It especially centres on changing the conditions of learning and related internal conditions in schools.

School improvement is the single most important business of the school in that it is the tool continuous process schools use to ensure that all students are provided with

access, opportunity and support to achieve at high levels. Teacher motivation naturally has to do with teachers' attitude to work. It has to do with teachers' desire to participate in the pedagogical processes within the school environment. It has to do with teachers' interest in student discipline and control, particularly in the classroom. Therefore it could underlie their involvement or non-involvement in academic and non-academic activities in schools (Ofoegbu, 2004). The teacher is the one who translates educational philosophy and objectives into knowledge and skill and transfers these to students in the classroom. Classroom climate is important in teacher motivation. If a teacher experiences the classroom as a safe, healthy and happy place with supportive resources and facilities for teaching for optimal learning, he/she tends to participate more than expected in the process of management, administration and the overall improvement of the school. The teacher commands and portrays the image of one who improves knowledge through the physical conditions of classroom orderliness, discipline and control. The teacher makes a diagnosis of student's feelings and attitudes inferred by their behaviour and response in the classroom environment. Hence, Lash and Kirkpatrick (1990) conclude that in the absence of school programmes the major responsibility of working with children in the school rests with the teacher. Likewise, Maehr and Midgley (1991) affirm that what takes place in the classroom, even though the classroom itself is not an island, is critical. Therefore, depending on the degree of congruence with classroom practices and school environment, teachers' teaching activities may dilute or enhance students' performance.

Effectiveness is what of change, while improvement is the *how* of change (Stoll & Fink, 1996). Teacher motivation, therefore, is anything done to make teachers happy, satisfied, dedicated and committed in such a way that they give their best in their places of work so that students, parents and the society will greatly benefit from their services. Teachers have both intrinsic and extrinsic needs. A teacher who is intrinsically motivated undertakes a task for its own sake, for the satisfaction it provides, or for the feeling of accomplishment and self-actualisation. On the other hand, an extrinsically motivated teacher may perform the activity/duty to obtain some reward such as a salary. Extrinsic motivation plays an important part in people's lives. It is pre-eminent in influencing a person's behaviour. Therefore, the aim of the organisation should be to build on and enhance the intrinsic motivation for teachers

to teach effectively and at the same time to supply some extrinsic motivation along the way for school improvement (Ofoegbu, 2004).

### **2.3.3 Performance indicators and teacher motivation**

Motivation is defined as the process that initiates, guides and maintains goal-oriented behaviours. It is what causes us to act, whether it is getting a glass of water to reduce thirst or reading a book to gain knowledge. More so, it involves the biological, emotional, social and cognitive forces that activate behaviour. In everyday usage, the term motivation is frequently used to describe why a person does something. For example, you might say that a student is so motivated to get into a clinical psychology programme that she spends every night studying.

This study is framed by the interpretive theory approach. This important considering that preceding studies did not study the school performance and motivation predisposition. In addition, there is a possibility that the theories relate more to other countries than they do to Namibia and may thus not be appropriate for framing this study. Though the study was framed by interpretive theory, the researcher reviewed literature on theories that relate to the key concepts in this study to enable familiarisation with theories that would enable a comparison between emergent findings and the existing theories. It would furthermore enable the identification of what could be pointing to an emergent theory. Motivation is to give reason, incentive, enthusiasm, or interest that causes a specific action or certain behaviour. It is present in every life function. A simple act such as eating is motivated by hunger. Education is motivated by desire for knowledge. Motivators can be anything from reward to coercion. Motivation is the force that initiates, guides and maintains goal-oriented behaviours. It is what causes us to take action, whether to grab a snack to reduce hunger or enrol in college to earn a degree. The forces that lie beneath motivation can be biological, social, emotional or cognitive in nature.

### **2.3.4 Performance indicators as measurement and surveillance tools**

Some of the teachers saw performance measurement as a legitimate and impartial managerial tool serving the interests of everyone in the organisation (e.g. by exposing free-riding). Others saw performance measurement as intrusive and oppressive, imposed on them by managers who, as agents of employers, used it to



serve a narrow set of interests, for example by intensifying work (Graham, 2012:189). We consider performance measurement to be a special type of organisational surveillance aimed at revealing the extent to which an employee's performance diverges from management's expectations (Graham, 2012:190). Such measurement provides the kinds of absolute and relative data that largely determines whether an employee's performance is deemed unsatisfactory, satisfactory, or exceptional. It therefore strongly contributes to how they see themselves and how they are seen by others. Over time this becomes a significant factor in establishing their status as a 'deviant', 'normal', or 'useful' member of the organisation (Graham, 2012:190).

According to Sewell and Barker (2006), this is a case of the few watching the many in the interest of the many. In contrast, the discourse of coercion would present performance measurement as a case of the few watching the many in the interests of the few. This is because the primary purpose of performance measurement is seen not as something that protects against antisocial behaviour (although this may be a side effect), but to ensure that employees work as hard as they possibly can all the time. Thus, the legitimacy of performance measurement depends on which side of the employer/employee fault line one stands, regardless of whether one subscribes to the discourse of care or coercion. However, the *modus operandi* of performance measurement would be the same: setting performance standards and then measuring actual performance to see whether these standards have been achieved (or even exceeded). It provides an apparently rational way of determining an individual's performance. From this particular understanding of the operation of performance measurement one can then draw on the discourse of care or coercion to develop coherent, but opposed positions on its consequences, especially the legitimacy of practical outcomes such as setting relative levels of remuneration, determining the severity of punishment, selecting who are dismissed or promoted, who are sent for retraining, and so forth (Graham, 2012:191).

Rewards in monetary form are not the only viable way to reward teachers. There are several other ways to motivate teachers to work hard, for example, performance appraisal is one, and most leadership practice that can motivate and promote competition in an organisation such as a school can influence teachers to work hard.

Appraisal is defined as a “process of arriving at judgment about a person’s past and present performance against the background for his or her work environment and his or her future potential for an organisation” (Heystek et al., 2008). However, performance appraisal can lead to serious and negative end results, for instance a well-performing teacher can be discouraged because his fellow teacher received a better appraisal than he has, and he may become violent because he feels threatened by others, or may become non-cooperative even when it is essential. Promotion, though it comes as a result of appraisal, also can motivate teachers to work hard. According to Fairburn and Malcomson (1994), promotion is the advancement of an employee’s rank or position in an organisational hierarchy system. Generally it means people who have seen others being elevated to higher heights are also likely to strive hard to achieve same recognition. Promotion may not necessarily mean getting a higher salary or status, like progressing from being an ordinary teacher to a head of department, it may also refer to being assigned further responsibilities such as supervising others and monitoring other teachers’ work, such as lesson plans and classroom observation.

An education system is complex. Teachers must complete multidimensional tasks and must spread their efforts across several activities. Holmstrom and Milgrom (1991) demonstrate that the performance metric to which compensation is tied affects how effort is distributed across duties. When production involves a multi-dimensional task and incentives are focussed on a single dimension, workers optimally expend less effort on other tasks. Thus, the performance measure used to evaluate performance and teachers’ potential responses are both important to consider. Although test scores are easily measured, tying performance pay to testing outcomes may cause teachers to focus on narrowly-defined basic skills that appear on exams (teaching to the test), or to overtly manipulate test scores (q.v. Levitt & Jacob, 2003; Jacob, 2005; Figlio, 2006; Figlio & Getzler, 2006; Cullen & Reback, 2006). On the other hand, teachers may respond to incentive payments by increasing effort in other ways, for instance, showing up at school more or increasing time with students outside of the classroom through extra-help sessions and after-school tutoring. Teacher compensation schemes are often criticised for their lack of performance pay and relatively low pay in general. The perceptions regarding teachers’ salaries potentially lead to sorting and adverse selection in the market for

teachers, as well as poor efforts from existing teachers. This simply means that the system has some short comings in that it only sought the services of those hardworking and performing teachers. A large body of empirical research shows that in other sectors, incentive pay successfully increases worker effort and output (Sarena, 2010:1). Thus, proponents of teacher merit pay argue that linking teacher salaries to student achievement induced teachers to focus on raising student achievement and stimulate innovation in the school system as a whole (Sarena, 2010:1). Money is not alone in motivating performance and promotions. Improved working conditions and increased decision-making authority may also be attractive to teachers, especially when combined with bonuses or salary increases. According to Lavy (2007:102), the Israeli school incentive programme included modest monetary bonuses, but large rewards in the form of media attention and enhanced reputation for the winning schools. Recognition and prestige are, it appears, highly effective motivators (Lavy, 2007:102).

Some opponents of teacher's pay for performance such as Springer and Podgursky (2007) argue that teacher performance is more difficult to monitor than performance in many other professions because output is not readily measured in a reliable, valid and fair manner. It is thus argued that the education sector cannot readily measure the value of the services provided by an individual teacher or a group of teachers, since achievement is influenced by many factors beyond the instructor's control. A second argument against merit-based pay programmes concerns team production (Springer, 2007:927). Teachers work as members of a team to a large extent. Introducing performance-based rewards at the individual teacher level might reduce incentives for teachers to cooperate and as a consequence, reduce rather than increase school performance. Some scholars argue that the team dynamic can be destroyed between teachers, as well as between teachers and administrators, especially if administrators are put in a position of rewarding individual teacher performance (Springer et al., 2007).

The quest to improve public education has led policymakers and researchers to focus on how to increase teachers' effectiveness. One obvious means is compensation. According to many observers, the traditional basis for teacher pay - years of service and education - provides little incentive for excellence. To make

teachers more effective, critics such as Lavy (2007) and Springer (2007) argue that pay should be tied to performance. Some school districts, in Namibia and abroad, are undertaking reforms to test those ideas. In November 2005, for example, in Denver, USA, voters approved a \$25 million tax increase to fund a form of *merit pay* to reward elementary and secondary school teachers along a variety of dimensions, including their own demonstrated knowledge and skills and student academic growth (Lavy, 2004:88).

Teachers' compensation pay for performance is meant to solve the twofold problem of motivating high teacher performance while attracting and retaining good teachers under conditions where their effort or ability is not readily measured or observed. In the teaching profession, earnings are based primarily on input (that is, skills and time worked), rather than on output. Such a basis, critics say, is not result-oriented. Moving to an earnings structure that ties pay at least partially to some performance indicators should thus improve the current system. In theory, the idea makes good sense. However, implementing pay for performance poses many practical challenges. In the teaching profession effort and output are difficult to define and measure because the work is generally complex, unique, and often results from team efforts, therefore with any one teacher's effort, it is difficult to disentangle it from that of the others on the team (Tomlinson, 2000).

Properly structured performance pay can offset shirking behaviour and encourage employees to provide more effort. Allowing compensation to vary with performance also aligns worker and employer incentives, providing information about the most valued aspects of an employee's job. When a job involves several tasks or when the nature of such tasks are broadly defined, incentive pay can help resolve confusion as to how best to fulfil responsibilities. If in at least some public schools, teachers exert little effort, or focus their effort on tasks with low marginal returns, teacher incentive pay may lead to increases in student learning. In the long run, a performance-based element of teacher pay may combat wage compression in the profession and increase the ability of individuals opting into the teaching profession (Hoxby & Leigh, 2004).

Some proponents of competition, such as Kohn (1986), view competition as a negative concept that undermines individual growth and development, as well as human relationships. Kilduff et al. (2010) have also advocated similar sentiments when they state that competition results in reduced motivation and productivity compared to cooperation. Therefore this chapter looks carefully at whether performance indicators can really motivate teachers to improve from both sides and not just from an administrator's point of view.

## **2.4 How motivation works**

There are two main kinds of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is internal. It occurs when people are compelled to do something out of pleasure, importance, or desire. Extrinsic motivation occurs when external factors compel the person to do something. However, there are many theories and labels that serve as sub-titles to the definition of motivation. For example: "I will give you a sweet if you clean your room." This is an example of external reward motivation. A common place that we see the need to apply motivation is in the work place. In the work force, we can see motivation play a key role in leadership success. A person unable to grasp motivation and apply it will not become or stay a leader. It is critical that anyone seeking to lead or motivate understands Howlett's Hierarchy of Work Motivators.

Salary, benefits, working conditions, supervision, policy, safety, security, affiliation, and relationships are all externally motivated needs. These are the first three levels of Howlett's Hierarchy. When these needs are achieved, the person moves up to level four and then five. However, if levels one to three are not met, the person becomes dissatisfied with their job. When satisfaction is not found, the person becomes less productive and eventually resigns or is fired. Achievement, advancement, recognition, growth, responsibility and nature of job are internal motivators. These are the last two levels of Howlett's Hierarchy. They occur when the person motivates him- or herself (after external motivation needs are met). An employer or leader that meets the needs on Howlett's Hierarchy will see motivated employees and see productivity increase.

Understanding the definition of motivation and then applying it is one of the most common challenges facing employers and supervisors. Companies often spend

thousands of rands each year hiring outside firms just to give motivation seminars. Another place motivation plays a key role is in education. A teacher who implements motivational techniques will see an increased participation, effort and higher grades.

The following are theories used by different researchers to frame studies about or to explain the motivation theory.

#### **2.4.1 Incentive Theory of Motivation**

The incentive theory suggests that people are motivated to do things because of external rewards. For example, you might be motivated to go to work each day for the monetary reward of being paid. Behavioural learning concepts such as association and reinforcement play an important role in this theory of motivation.

#### **2.4.2 Drive Theory of Motivation**

According to the drive theory of motivation, people are motivated to take certain actions in order to reduce the internal tension that is caused by unmet needs. For example, you might be motivated to drink a glass of water to reduce the internal state of thirst. This theory is useful in explaining behaviours that have a strong biological component, such as hunger or thirst. The problem with the drive theory of motivation is that these behaviours are not always motivated purely by physiological needs. For example, people often eat even when they are not really hungry.

#### **2.4.3 Arousal Theory of Motivation**

The arousal theory of motivation suggests that people take certain actions to either decrease or increase levels of arousal. When arousal levels get too low, for example, a person might watch an exciting movie or go for a jog. When arousal levels get too high, on the other hand, a person would probably look for ways to relax such as meditating or reading a book. According to this theory, we are motivated to maintain an optimal level of arousal, although this level can vary based on the individual or the situation.

#### **2.4.4 Humanistic Theory of Motivation**

Humanistic theories of motivation are based on the idea that people also have strong cognitive reasons to perform various actions. This is famously illustrated by Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which presents different motivations at different levels. First, people are motivated to fulfil basic biological needs for food and shelter, as well as those of safety, love and esteem. Once the lower level needs have been met, the primary motivator becomes the need for self-actualisation, or the desire to fulfil one's individual potential.

People are generally motivated by whatever good things happen to them, and teachers are no exception. It is therefore up to the school managers to create conditions that are conducive to teaching and learning.

#### **2.4.5 Performance indicators and motivation**

Accurate indicators of educational effectiveness are needed to advance national policy goals of raising student achievement and closing social/cultural based achievement gaps. If constructed and used appropriately, such indicators for both programme evaluation and the evaluation of teacher and school performance could have a transformative effect on the nature and outcomes of teaching and learning. Measures based on Value-added models of student achievement (VAMs) are gaining increasing acceptance among policymakers as an improvement over conventional indicators of performance. Much controversy exists, however, as to the best way to construct VAMs and to their optimal application. A plethora of methods has been developed (Sanders & Horn, 1994; Sanders et al., 1997; McCaffrey et al., 2004; Raudenbush, 2009). Although monetary rewards are the most common incentive in performance-related pay, other incentives can include reduced teaching load, promotion, and public recognition of outstanding teachers. The reward can be just a one-time event or it can be on-going, leading to a permanent salary increase. It can be based on a relative criterion (for example, the average test score gain of a teacher's class relative to the classes of other teachers).

While incentive-based performance indicators are considered as motivating on the side of the teachers, implementing individual-based incentives may create unfair competition between teachers, especially in the absence of transparent criteria, thus



undermining collaboration (Lavy, 2007). Even if evaluation is accurate and fair, teachers may still feel aggrieved if their competence is questioned. Evaluation may also create new hierarchies by giving administrators an additional source of power over teachers and the curriculum. Individual incentives could also undermine principal-teacher relationships because of the asymmetry in how each party views teacher evaluation. Teachers use it to determine how they are performing and how they can improve, while principals use it to measure teachers' contribution to the school (Lavy, 2007:92).

Some analysts caution that performance-based pay may have unintended consequences. Teachers, for example, may focus on the easiest way to increase the rewarded measure, while ignoring measures that schools and parents ultimately want to improve. Similarly, when one dimension of output is easily measured, but another is not, teachers may dedicate their efforts to maximising the measurable at the expense of the unmeasured dimension. Collectively, such efforts could even begin to constrict a school's curriculum to measurable subjects. Pay based on reading and maths test scores, for example, might encourage teachers to favour those subjects at the expense of, say, music and art or values and civic responsibility. Measuring student output may stimulate teachers to participate in inappropriate or deviant behaviour, such as cheating. Using data from Chicago's public schools, Brian Jacob and Steve Levitt detected cheating in approximately 4 to 5 per cent of the classes in their sample (Lavy, 2007:92).

Providing financial incentives to improve performance may be counterproductive in other ways as well. First, it may demoralise teachers, resulting in reduced effort. In laboratory experiments, one study found that workers in high-powered incentive systems may become unmotivated and thus work less than they would under a flat wage regime. Secondly, financial incentives may undermine intrinsic motivation, that is, the sense of duty or satisfaction that motivates coming to work. This threat is particularly real for teachers, who, as a group, exhibit strong intrinsic motivation flowing from the value they place on interacting with children and seeing them succeed. Another potential distortion is that teachers may focus disproportionate attention on those students who are most likely to improve their test scores or to cross a designated threshold. The high and low performing students may



consequently be neglected because they do not show adequate output on investments made by their teachers.

The risks posed to teachers by performance-based pay could lead them to demand high compensation, which could in turn raise the cost of education. Unlike relatively risk free input-based payment, performance-based pay exposes employees to earnings variability beyond their control. If teachers, like other workers, are risk averse, inducing them to accept a risky compensation package will entail higher average pay overall. Teachers are motivated by non-financial incentives. A frequent criticism of performance-based pay is that teachers, as professionals relatively immune to motivation by pecuniary rewards, will not respond to financial incentives (Podgursky et al., 2007).

Monetary rewards could thus simply inflame resentment toward management and decrease employee loyalty, both of which could reduce productivity. One study suggests that non-monetary rewards, such as additional holidays, may be better motivators. Teacher unions worldwide strongly oppose performance-based pay. Unions view wage differentiation on the basis of subject taught, as well as any sort of subjective evaluation of teachers, as threats to their collective bargaining strategies and therefore reject them outright.

#### **2.4.6 Teacher motivation**

In Namibia, the ministry of education introduced a national, regional, circuit and school programme aimed at recognising individuals' achievement through prize giving or awards, promotion and performance ranking in an attempt to motivate stakeholders. Such ministerial action has stimulated aggressive competition among education directors, circuit inspectors, school principals, teachers and learners. Everyone wants their institutions to be among the best. That has, according to Brown (1998) led to competition, which he further describes as one person winning and enjoying the greater share of awards, while another must lose and settle for fewer awards. Researchers have been curious to learn if school award programmes are more effective in motivating educators than earlier individual merit pay schemes.

Kelley (1999) examined teacher responses to the programmes and whether the responses were predictive of their school's subsequent success. Teachers varied in their responses as to whether they wanted the bonus part of the School Based Performance Awards (SBPA) programme to continue or not. However, some teachers felt that awards paid as incentives in addition to their work appeared to have more meaning to them than awards paid as school improvement funds Kelley, (1999), 18-19. However, Kilduff et al., (2010) feel competition resulting from performance indicators by teachers leaves some long lasting psychological scars that may influence competitor's behaviours even after such a competition has been called off. Furthermore, in Namibia and Katima circuit in particular have seen many teachers cheating or faking learners' results just to obtain a reward at the end of the year, sacrificing one's own gains in order to limit the gain of others, or unwillingness to cooperate and share information with others (Sheya, 2011:10). Heystek et al., (2008) stated that

it may sound unfamiliar to many schools to work for a competitive advantage ...  
it can be challenging for school leaders to lead their people in the western-dominated culture when the teachers may be more inclined to an African social culture and supportive of Ubuntu culture.

Rubin and Belgrave (1999) contend that performance-based incentives or rewards are perceived as western-centred where the highest value of life lies in the acquisition of the object. The findings that are based on extensive teacher surveys and interviews in Kentucky and North Carolina's CMS provide insight into the impact of CPI as reported by the professionals they seek to engage. Kelley identified three critical factors that drive teacher motivation: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Both positive and negative outcomes could be motivators. The key findings for Kentucky and the CMS district were that teachers reported a high level of commitment and that the vast majority were trying to meet their school's goals of improved student achievement. Many reported they had made changes in instructional practices to better align with programme goals. Significantly positive coefficients were obtained for the effect of the bonus on goal commitment in both jurisdictions, suggesting the positive role bonuses can play in increased teacher understanding of and commitment to the goals.

Interview findings from teachers in the two programmes shed further light on their perceptions of the bonuses:

- Teachers felt it was appropriate to receive bonuses and that receiving a bonus was deserved.
- The teachers varied in how meaningful the size of the bonus they could receive actually was, especially after deductions for taxes.
- The teachers varied in how much the possibility of earning a bonus motivated them to improve student achievement, or whether an even larger bonus would motivate them more.
- Teachers were sceptical that earned bonuses would actually be paid, due to past experiences with actual reneging on bonus payments or beliefs that the funding for the bonuses would not be continued.
- The meaning of the bonus varied, with teachers variously viewing it as an appropriate "thank you," a formal recognition, reimbursement for personal expenditures on school-related items, a reward that allowed for the purchase of desired goods, or that it was simply irrelevant.
- Teachers in Kentucky found that having to decide among themselves how to divide up the bonus money among teachers and staff was a divisive process that created tension within and between schools.

Attempts to establish a direct correlation between teacher motivational responses and actual school success in meeting student achievement goals were inconclusive. Evidence suggests that for the CMS teachers, the positive awards associated with the programme may contribute to school performance and influence teachers' attitudes. As for Kentucky teachers, only the average goal clarity (understanding and commitment) level was significantly related to school performance. Teachers' individual and group expectancy levels were greater in schools in which teachers perceived stronger assessment data feedback mechanisms, principal support or professional community, lack of goal conflict and higher levels of perceived fairness of the programme. Previous success in the programme was an influencing factor as

well; these teachers' expectations were higher given their school's past history of success using SBPA programmes (Hoxby & Leigh, 2004). These are all important aspects of implementation and design to consider.

Kelley (1999) notes,

we clearly and convincingly found an SBPA program is not just a bonus program; rather it is one element in an interrelated system of rewards, opportunities, and demands that influences teachers' jobs and lives in a multitude of ways, leading them to experience (and form values about) a variety of both extrinsic and intrinsic outcomes.

On the other hand, focusing on rewards, especially bonuses, is a temporary compliance that does not endure commitment to any value or commitment. They are merely a temporary change. I can argue that rewards can reduce job satisfaction among senior teachers, which might be viewed by proponents of market-based reform such as Ladd and Fiske (2003), as a positive outcome. As much as teachers have to work together as a team, they are equally competitive for rewards, bonus pays or management recognitions. This has instilled a culture of competition in schools, which according to Malhotre (2010), has impact on teacher behaviours and level of motivation for success.

#### **2.4.7 Summary**

In general, empirical research shows that incentive pay enhances effort, output, and desirable outcomes. However, despite significant expenditures on the NYC bonus programme, researchers find little effect on student achievement. They estimate a small reduction in absences for teachers with the largest incentives, suggesting a limited effect on teacher effort. However, increases in effort were not large enough to translate into increased student achievement, even in schools where bonus payments approximated individual incentives. We find no significant impact on student or teacher assessments of classroom activities, tutoring, or administrative decisions. Finally, it does not appear that the programme affected teacher turnover or the quality of new teachers within treatment schools. The fact that we find a response among teachers with the largest incentives provides evidence that teachers did understand the bonus scheme, but the potential for free-riding in most

schools reduced the incentives for teachers to increase their effort. The results underscore the fact that the structure of teacher performance pay is important. Our education system today requires stakeholders who are committed to the realisation of the concept of education for all. However, teachers, as the main key players in the system should be motivated by whatsoever means

## **CHAPTER 3: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the research methodology, that is, the strategies and tools used in collecting data, as well as the methods employed in analysing the data that were collected. Ethical considerations are also covered.

### **3.2 Research approach**

The study followed a qualitative approach. This enabled the collection of rich data that contributed to a thorough understanding of the school improvement and development phenomenon in the selected two Katima circuit secondary schools (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001).

Regarding the qualitative research approach, Vierra and Pollock (1998) state that:

Qualitative research does not involve numbers and counting, and it usually has a broader focus than that of quantitative research. Typically, it involves observing of events in totality or most of their complexity, rather than focusing on just few aspects.

Qualitative research techniques are best suited for observing the situation and interacting with participants of each individual school to get first-hand information. In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument of data collection (Borman, 1986; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### **3.3 Research orientation and approach**

A research method refers to the various techniques used in sampling, collecting and analysing data in a study (Henning et al., 2004). There are three main research methods that can be used in empirical research and these are quantitative, qualitative and mixed research methods. The selection of the method to be used in a study is “dependent on the aims and objectives of the study, the nature of the

phenomenon being investigated and the underlying theory or expectations of the investigator” (Henning et al., 2004:49).

The assumption underlying the qualitative study is that reality is constructed by people who create their own meanings out of what they experience (van der Mescht, 2009). It is believed that people create their own meanings, and that ‘reality’ consists of how they view and interpret their world (Johannes, 2009). Thus, reality is a fundamentally subjective phenomenon, and differs from person to person. It is for this reason that the interpreter’s ontology is said to be unstable and not value-free. The epistemological consequence of this is that reality can only be known by interacting with people (van der Mescht, 2009; Johannes, 2009; Cohen et al., 2007).

The interviews enabled me to find out how schools are managed, how teachers conduct their lessons and how learners spend their time in school. According to Merriam (2001:6) “qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world”. This research was aimed at understanding teachers’ perception and experiences regarding performance indicators as a tool to improve teachers and motivate them to work hard. It is only through the interaction with teachers that I was able to experience what they know regarding the issue under discussion, hence an interpretive orientation is thus appropriate for this study. McMillan and Schumacher describe qualitative research as follows:

Qualitative research suggests grounded propositions, provides explanations to extend our understanding of phenomena, or promotes opportunities of informed decisions for social action. Qualitative research contributes to theory, educational practice, policy making and social consciousness (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:393).

Merriam (1998:5) describes qualitative research as “an umbrella concept that covers several forms of inquiry helping researchers understand and explain the meanings of social phenomena with little or no disruption of the natural setting”. Qualitative researchers define and examine people’s individual and collective actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions about a phenomenon. It is therefore the responsibility of the researcher to interpret the phenomena in terms of the meanings the participants of his/her study bring to him/her (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). What the above

means is that qualitative researchers “seek insight rather than statistical analysis” (Bell, 1999:7).

The study was a case study of two secondary schools on performance indicators for school improvement, in one rural and one urban secondary school in the Katima circuit. The case study method provided an opportunity to develop an in-depth understanding of performance indicators in the two secondary schools within a limited time scale of one year (Bell, 1999). It enabled the development of a better understanding of school improvement and development in schools of different circumstances (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001; Cohen et al., 2007). In this case the differences relate to one rural and one urban secondary school in the Katima circuit of the Caprivi region of Namibia.

### **3.4 Theoretical research framework**

The study is framed by interpretive theory, as it is more accepting of free will and sees human behaviour as the outcome of the subjective interpretation of the environment. It may help link findings from the study to existing theories on similar topics (Punch, 2009; Creswell, 2005). It is hoped that the theory can provide a better explanation of the matter under study than a borrowed theory that might not fit and be relevant to the situation (Creswell, 2005). The theory was inductively developed from data, meaning that the collected data was used to produce a general theory about the effectiveness of performance indicators in the two schools (Punch, 2009). Makwinja-Morara (2007:56) says “there are many qualitative methods available to researchers depending on the type of issues being explored”. Creswell (1998) identifies five traditions as part of interpretive theory, namely biography, case study, ethnography, grounded theory and phenomenology. This study was conducted as a comparative case study. The following discussion informs these methods and their suitability in this study.

#### **3.4.1 Comparative case study**

As already mentioned earlier, this is a case study in which the researcher set out to study how school performance indicators are used to motivate teachers to work hard in the two secondary schools of Katima Mulilo. The research is a small-scale, qualitative case study. According to Yin (2003:1) “case studies are the preferred



strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context”. In case studies, the researcher is able to “probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit with a view to establishing generalizations about the wider population to which that unit belongs” (Johannes, 2009:38).

The choice of this method was informed by views such as Bell’s (1999:10) that “a case study provides an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in some depth within a limited time scale”. In this study, the researcher sought to search for answers and a deeper understanding of how the school’s performance indicators motivate teachers to work hard in the two Katima Mulilo cluster secondary schools. The study spanned within a period of one month. The researcher felt it would be more appropriate to compare the motivational level of school A to that of school B in terms of how teachers were motivated by these performance indicators to work hard and also to find a clear-cut distinction as to why one school’s teachers are not as motivated as the other school while they use similar performance indicators. It is also important to mention here that the fact that the two schools under investigation are located in different environments, namely semi-rural and urban, may perhaps help in answering some questions of why some teachers could be more motivated than others. Comparing these schools does not in any way try to place one school above the other if one school is found not to be doing well. The aim is just to find reasons why they do not fare better than teachers of the other school.

The aim of the study was to provide a clear picture of whether performance indicators can really motivate teachers to work hard in the selected schools. This can only be possible through studying social relations, actions and interactions of all the parties involved within those particular locations of the study (Opie, 2004).

### **3.5 Data collection strategies and tools**

In qualitative research, the researcher himself or herself is the instrument of data collection (Chisaka, 2002:21). As a researcher, I used the following data collection strategies and tools:

### **3.5.1 Interviews as data collection strategies**

Data was gathered by means of one-on-one interviews (see Appendices A). The semi-structured interviews provided access to in-depth information that would not have been accessed through structured interviews and other methods of data collection, such as document analysis. Examples of expressions gained through the interviews include participants' feelings, intentions, thoughts, knowledge and reasoning about performance indicators for schools' academic improvement in the two school settings (Christensen & Johnson, 2008; Yin, 1986). I gathered information from school principals, heads of department and teachers in one urban and one rural secondary school of the Katima circuit by means of semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews gave access to information such as feelings and intentions (Yin, 1986). They also produced in-depth information about participants' thoughts, knowledge, reasoning and feelings about the subject under research (Christensen & Johnson, 2008).

In other words, the semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to enter the inner worlds of the participants and gain an understanding of their perspectives about the performance indicators in the two secondary schools (Christen & Johnson, 2008). The researcher tried to enter the inner worlds of the interviewees by establishing close relationships of trust and rapport (Christensen & Johnson, 2008; Creswell, 2005).

One-on-one interviews were conducted with both school principals of the two schools selected, with two HODs and five teachers, because it is difficult to interview participants as groups as they may come from different settings and backgrounds or have sensitive issues to disclose. However, one criterium was that the selected teachers should have taught at such schools for at least five years (Creswell, 2005).

Informal conversational tone was used in the interviews to make participants feel at ease to freely provide the required information (Christensen & Johnson, 2008). Though the tone of the interviews was informal, the researcher used an interview guide to keep the interviews on track and it helped to bring the interviewees back when they went off topic (Christensen & Johnson, 2008). The interviews were relatively semi-structured to allow the interviewees to express their opinions freely (Christensen & Johnson, 2008). The interviews were audio-taped to ensure complete

capture of the verbal interaction and provide material for reliability checks (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). The tape-recording of the interviews also ensured that important information was not being lost (Christensen & Johnson, 2008).

Furthermore, qualitative researchers consider interviews to be important in collecting research data for the following reasons:

- They provide important background information on respondents, which is useful in terms of reliability of the source of data.
- Interviews provide access to information that cannot be accessed through observation and document analysis, such as feelings and intentions (Chisaka, 2002:21).
- The researcher is likely to gain valuable insights based on the depth of information gathered and the wisdom of key informants.
- Direct contact at the point of the interview means that data can be checked for accuracy and relevance as they are collected (Denscombe, 2000:136).

It is towards this end that the researcher decided to use interviews to get first-hand information and identify the relative issues through facial expressions and gestures. Nekaro (2001) observes that:

Research on teaching has been moving away from a quantitative mode of enquiry with its prescriptive methods, designs and objective findings since the 1980s. A new paradigm called qualitative or ethnographic research based on fieldwork, usually written in narrative form, was replacing the rigid form of research that ignored the real situation in which the actual educational activities were taking place.

Semi-structured interviews constituted a purposeful strategy to get information (Maswahu, 2012) about teachers' perceptions of the relevance of performance indicators in school improvement and development phenomenon. A guide/interview protocol was used with questions and topics that were presented to the study participants during the interviews (Christensen & Johnson, 2008) in the two study locations. Though the researcher had some discretion about the order in which

questions were asked. The questions were standardised, and probes were provided to ensure that the researcher covered the correct material. In addition, probes were used to make sure that complete and reliable information was received throughout the interviews. This helped to collect complete information in a manner that is fairly conversational. Semi-structured interviews were also used because the study aimed to delve deeply into, and to thoroughly understand, the answers provided by participants.

Various strategies were used to enter the inner worlds' of the interviewees. For example, close relationships were established with the interviewees through the use of an informal tone. This strategy helped develop participant trust and good rapport between the participants and interviewer, and this enabled participants to respond fully and honestly to questions presented to them (Christensen & Johnson, 2008; Creswell, 2005). Though the tone of the interviews was informal, the researcher used an interview guide to keep the interviews on track and help bring the interviewees back when they went off topic (Christensen & Johnson, 2008). The guide was relatively unstructured to allow probing and free expressions of opinions by respondents (Christensen & Johnson, 2008). Interviews with the schools' principals and the teachers were all carried out in English.

### **3.6 The sample**

A sample is a group of people/individuals who are selected and used in a study to gain their perceptions, views and understanding about the issue under scrutiny (Behr, 1988). This is usually a portion of the population taken for purposively to gain a deeper understanding of the issue under investigation from their own perspectives. Sampling is done due to time and financial constraints, because it is practically impossible to study the whole population involved in the issue under investigation (Maswahu, 2012). The sample included five teachers from each school, the schools' principals, and two HODs. School principals were purposively chosen because they are knowledgeable and informative about the school performance indicators in their schools.

There are three senior secondary schools and six combined schools in the Katima circuit. One senior secondary school was sampled to represent the remaining two in

the circuit, especially those in the urban setting. The one combined school was selected on the basis of its rural setting, and even more for being a school that had shown a drastic decrease in academic performance for the past four years (2009 to 2013) since the introduction of the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPI) seven years ago in 2006. The researcher wanted to ascertain whether the introduction of these NSPI have had an impact on the motivational aspects of teachers and subsequent effect on academic performance. This enabled a good comparison of the two types of settings, which would help develop a better understanding of the performance indicators for school improvement in these two school settings. All of the participants selected for the interviews were those teaching either grade ten and/or grade 12. This is so because those are the grades writing external examinations and this is where the researcher intended to measure the extent to which the indicators have helped in motivating teachers to work hard (Makwinja-Morara, 2007). The selected teachers were from different disciplines, of different genders, and had different qualifications. Some of the teachers held diplomas and some were working on their Master's degrees already. The other most important criterion in this sample of teachers was the motivational level of the teacher. Positive hard working teachers may have a totally different perspective and attitude than teachers who are "negative" and not so dedicated and hard working. To prove this, the researcher asked the school principal to provide names of teachers who are willing and keen when it comes to submission of work, and teachers who are not willing to do something extra or whose work is late or who gets bad results. The researcher selected the teachers for interviews from this list of names provided. The researcher decided to consider both positive and negative teachers to gauge the views of both and then sample out those to interview because such a mixed group could provide a more accurate view of whether or not PIs can improve learners' performance academically.

Teachers were also being selected by means of purposive sampling (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Only teachers who have been at the school for a period of about five years or more were selected as they are more likely to be experienced and knowledgeable about the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2005). The criterium of seniority was also be used to select the five teachers at each school as these persons are more experienced with the running of the school. Moreover, they

are the population or elements of interest in the study and are thus assumed to have rich experiences and information regarding the issue under investigation (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). The researcher's intention in this study is to investigate the effectiveness of performance indicators through multiple perspectives of individuals and sites to highlight the complexity of the problem (Creswell, 2005). Since the region is the furthest from the capital city Windhoek, which is the country's administrative headquarters, the region seems to be developing late with regard to infrastructure and educational development compared to other regions that are close to the administrative centre. It is because of such factors, among others, that it is considered to be one of the regions in the country with the lowest academic performance (Maswahu, 2012). The Katima Mulilo cluster, in which the two schools under study are located, is part of the Katima Mulilo circuit. The Katima Mulilo circuit has four clusters, and Katima Mulilo cluster is the only cluster in the circuit and even in the whole region that has a combination of rural and urban schools.

In addition, the schools were to some extent strategically selected based on the schools' easy accessibility from the researcher's home. This consideration was necessary when taking into account that data collection was going to involve travelling to the schools on a daily basis for about a month or so. The complexity of performance indicators in school improvement phenomena call for explorations by means of multiple perspectives of these phenomena by different groups of researchers (Creswell, 2005). Both principals of school A and B in the study are male. The Principal of School A was referred to as PRL A whilst that of School B was referred to as PRL B.

Though gender balance was sought in the selection of teachers, there were two male teachers and three female teachers selected in both Schools A and B. This was because there were more female teachers in both schools than their male counterparts, and hence a higher representation of female teachers in the two study locations. It is believed that gender differences also play a vital role in debates of this nature. For example, female teachers are believed to have supported the idea of PIs playing a role in improving the academic performance in the two schools, while males were more critical of the idea.

### 3.7 Data analysis

According to Dey (2005) “Analysis involves breaking data down into bits and then ‘beating’ the bits together.” The derivation of the term *analysis*, according to Dey (2005), is from the Greek where the prefix *ana* means *above*, and the root *lysis* means *to break up* or *to dissolve*. According to the motivation provided in support of the statement, Lukubwe, (2006) states that this is a process of dividing data into its constituent components to reveal its characteristic elements and structure. Because this is an interpretive study, the researcher used the narrative form as a way of portraying the perceptions and experiences of teachers and their principals on the relevance of performance indicators in school improvement and development.

The researcher allowed participants’ voices to be heard throughout the chapter by way of quotations so that the reader is able to experience their environment and context (Johannes, 2009:45). Narrative analysis is more about putting experience into words, whether we do this verbally, in writing, or in thought, or by transforming the actual experience into a communicable representation. Thus, speech forms are not the experiences themselves, but a socially and culturally constructed device for creating shared understandings about them. Narrative analysis is a strategy that recognises the extent to which the stories we tell provide insights about our lived experiences (Reisman, 1993).

After all the data had been collected and transcribed and the researcher read all the information and obtained a general sense of its meaning. After this the researcher began the process of coding, which involved organising chunks of information into groups or categories based on similarities (Merriam, 1998). After all codes were decided upon, the data were studied to determine what was being revealed as far as the research topic was concerned. The researcher then determined the categories into which the collected information fell (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). The researcher also familiarised himself with the descriptive information that was collected and allowed the categories to emerge as the analysis continued (Maswahu, 2012). Data analysis was thus conducted through a process in which findings were “inductively generated from robust data patterns” (Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010). This meant focusing on identifying what the study participants valued and felt was important when articulating their views, opinions and experiences (Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010).



Patton (2002:433) adds that the “human factor is the great strength and fundamental weakness of qualitative inquiry and analysis - a scientific two-edged sword”. If the researcher fails to analyse data in a way that produces meaningful findings, the study becomes less valid than it might otherwise have been. To increase the likelihood that data analysis yields meaningful findings, researchers make use of thorough and systematic procedures. Although analysis and interpretation are usually taken as a single process, a clear distinction exists between the two in ethnographic research. According to Wolcott (1994), analysis is the process whereby key factors and relationships among data are carefully and systematically identified and isolated. Interpretation on the other hand, is where one seeks to impose meaning on one’s data or making sense on one’s data (Wolcott, 1994).

In this study, the researcher separated data from its interpretation. The analysis part consisted of categorising data into manageable themes, identifying and isolating what is important to note, what the researcher learnt during the research process, as well as what he reported in his research. Thick data, according to Chisaka (2002:24), is the pivotal base of qualitative research. The researcher used participants’ own words where appropriate and gives a vivid description of the situation as he found it at the site of the study. During the research process, analysis of data was done continuously, identifying and isolating major and recurrent themes that emerged.

As the analysis continued, the researcher had an opportunity to verify with the participants if the perceptions he developed from the analysis of data were really representative of their own views. This cross-checking of the data with participants to some extent satisfied the requirement for member checking, which Chisaka (2002:24) say is “the most crucial technique for establishing credibility”. The second stage commenced when the researcher left the site of the study. This is the stage during which the researcher transcribed the data recorded on audio-tapes and compared these with the field notes. During the interpretation of data, the researcher examined data against the background of educational policy, professional principles and the literature he have reviewed.

The researcher also familiarised himself with the descriptive information that was collected and allowed the categories to emerge as the analysis continued. During the analysis of the data the following codes emerged:



- the general terms used by the study participants
- the participants' original terms that captured their meanings or experiences about the issue under discussion in the two study locations

Memo-writing was the next stage of the analysis process. This consisted of the writing of systematic notes derived from the participants' own words, feelings and experiences about the phenomena under study. Immediately after each interview, the researcher transcribed the recordings and took the transcripts to the respondents for member checking. Member checking is done to ensure that what is transcribed represents the actual information given by the interviewee(s) (Cohen et al., 2007:142).

The data that were collected were coded. According to Cohen et al. (2007:492), "coding is the process of disassembling and reassembling the data. Data is disassembled when it is broken apart into lines, paragraphs, or sections". Disassembling is thus the first step in the data-analysis process. The next step was to create themes so that the data was 'reassembled' into categories that addressed the research questions. The researcher's data analysis was an on-going and protracted activity, thus he did not wait until all the data was collected, but instead began with preliminary coding from the outset. Informing data analysis in this study are pointers by Ngcobo (2005:80) who say that:

... By focusing on an area of study one gathers data from a variety of sources, including interviews and questionnaires. Once gathered, the data are analysed using coding and theoretical sampling procedures. When this is done, theories are generated, with the help of interpretive procedures, before being finally written up and presented.

In line with the above, together with recommendations by authors such as Dick (2002), analysis commenced concurrently with data collection and proceeded throughout the process. Of main concern throughout was the desire to understand what was happening at the schools, why it was happening, how the players managed what is happening, and how all of this was impacting on teacher motivation.

### **3.8 Validity and trustworthiness**

Although some researchers have suggested that concepts of validity, reliability and trustworthiness are typical of quantitative research review, Cohen (2000) employs the term trustworthiness in lieu of validity and reliability for qualitative research.

#### **3.8.1 Reliability**

Reliability in qualitative research method is traditionally associated with accuracy, stability, consistency and repeatability of the research. The core meaning of reliability in this case is that of the absence of random errors (Lukubwe, 2006:58). Reliability is a fit between what researchers' record shows and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being investigated. Cohen et al. (2000:119) contend that reliability is not about striving for uniformity, but rather about the correctness and comprehensiveness of the findings of the research. In order to address the issues of reliability in qualitative research, Cohen et al. (2000) suggest that both internal and external reliability be addressed. The paragraphs below present such a distinction:

#### **3.8.2 Internal reliability**

Internal reliability has reference to reliability during the research project. The writer argues that internal reliability can be ensured or achieved by applying measures such as the following:

##### **3.8.2.1 Triangulation**

For triangulation purposes, the researcher collected data from a variety of sources, for example, teachers and principals from the two schools selected, which may also help with the internal reliability. Although only one method of triangulation was used in this research, namely is interviews, the differing viewpoints of the respondents helped the researcher in evaluating and cross-checking the reliability of the research findings. According to Cohen (2000), triangulation is an attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint. In this case, investigator triangulation as a method was also used where various investigators who researched on the same topic were consulted. It involves space, time and persons. Furthermore, Patton (2002:559) feels

that triangulating of data sources means “comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information derived at different times by different means within qualitative methods”. Equally, Cohen et al. (2007) and Johannes (2009:42) state that “triangulation is a powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity, particularly in qualitative research”.

#### **3.8.2.2 Peer examination**

The research was presented to fellow teachers not involved as participants to read through what has been gathered and to give comments. The aim was to compare the preliminary findings to those of other researchers who work on the same topic to compare similarities and differences. It is done by comparing one’s findings of the research with those of the other researchers by means of either oral or written work.

#### **3.8.2.3 Consensus**

The researcher and the participants agreed at some point through open discussion on issues pertaining to their work and the challenges they faced.

#### **3.8.2.4 Mechanisation**

During the research process, I used audio materials such as an audiotape to store the information to avoid the interview content from being lost.

#### **3.8.2.5 Member checks**

Participants were accorded the opportunity to verify transcriptions of the interview as part of member checking. This is in line with Stake (1995: 115) who says,

“The actor is asked to review the material for accuracy and palatability. This process was necessary in order to ensure validity and for the purposes of triangulation. The researcher had done this during the interview process. During this process, the researcher summarized the information and then question the participants involved. This allowed participants to critically analyse the findings and comment on them. The aim of doing so was for participants to affirm the accuracy and completeness and to finally certify the research to be credible.”

### **3.8.3 External reliability**

According to Cohen (2000), external reliability refers to the verification of the findings of the research, when independent researchers will in the same situation and by using the same participants reach the same conclusions if they were to carry out the same research. The aim of trustworthiness in a qualitative inquiry is to support the argument that the inquiry's findings are "worth paying attention to" (<http://www.omnivise.com/contact.htm>). This is quite different from the conventional experimental precedent of attempting to show validity, soundness, and significance. For example, the extent to which an independent researcher can reproduce a study and obtain results similar to those obtained in the original study. More so the extent to which the results can be generalised from samples to populations.

### **3.9 Ethical issues**

The data in this study include intimate details of the participants. This made it crucial to keep the information as confidential and anonymous as possible by, for example, using codes or pseudonyms in place of participants' real names. The use of participants' real names might be damaging to the participants by exposing their problems and experiences about the school to the rest of the world (Creswell, 2005; Lichtman, 2006). Confidentiality and consent was agreed upon with participants. Informed consent from all the research participants was also sought before data gathering (Christensen & Johnson, 2008). The purpose of the process of getting consent was explained to them that they may decide whether to participate in the study or not. Personal consent forms were designed for completion by research participants to serve as proof of their consent and for reference purposes in case adverse happenings occur in future in relation to the study (Bell, 1999). Guarantees of privacy and confidentiality were part of consent forms, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage whenever they felt unwilling to continue participating in the study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). Another additional measure to guarantee confidentiality that the researcher looked into was to store the interview tapes and notes in a safe place for two years and to later destroy them. The researcher is the only person who has access to the raw data that was collected (Manzione, 2002). Ethical clearance was sought from the university while permission to conduct the study was also obtained from the Caprivi Regional Education

Directorate and the schools' principals (Creswell, 2005). Both the permission and ethical clearance ensured that the rights of participants in the study are protected. Permission for recording interviews was also sought prior to the interview, and confidentiality was maintained throughout the research project. A letter of consent was signed by all participants (Cohen, 2007:52-55). As a way of creating a relaxed atmosphere of mutual trust, I talked to the participants informally before the interviews began. Furthermore, I declared my interest and assure participants about the purpose of the study, which is simply trying to find out what their experiences were, and not to evaluate their work. In these circumstances, confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the exercise was the key agreement (Cohen, 2007:52).

### **3.10 Summary**

This chapter explained the rationale for choosing a qualitative approach to the research. The method(s) used for data collection are clearly detailed in this chapter and this consists of one-on-one interviews. The chapter indicated how and why participants were selected and how data analysis was carried out. Qualitative research projects, and more specifically, the results yielded by case studies, are known to be difficult to generalise. This is because of the subjectivity underlying the information that respondents may give and the small sample size. Furthermore, to study a case that is directly linked to the researcher's work might pose some challenges in that respondents may conceal important information because of my being a colleague. Finally, performance indicators policy aims to enhance common standards across the country, and so to improve the quality of education at a national level.

In the next chapter, the data is presented and analysed.

## **CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR SCHOOLS' ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the data collected in the study. He identified four main categories used to present teachers' perceptions of the relevance of the performance indicators for school improvement and development in Namibia. The interviews were transcribed, interpreted and analysed. The participants in this study are principals of secondary schools, heads of department and teachers. The participants and schools have been categorised or coded as follows:

- T1 (1), T 2 (1), T 3 (1), T 4 (1), and T 5 (1) are codes for teachers at school 1, while T 6 (2), T 7 (2), T 8 (2), T 9 (2) and T 10 (2) are the codes assigned to the ten teachers and their respective schools at both school 1 and school 2 respectively.
- H.O. 1 (1), H.O. 2 (1), H.O. 3 (2) and H.O. 4 (2) represents the four heads of department interviewed in both school 1 and school 2.
- PRL 1 (1) and PRL 2 (2) are codes for the two principals interviewed at their respective schools (school 1 and school 2).

The leading data in this presentation were obtained from the interviews with teachers. The results of the study are presented in themes as they emerged from responses of the participants from the interview questions, and are then compared to predetermined themes from the literature review presented in Chapter Two.

The following sections are presented in this chapter:

- General response to the performance indicators (PIs)
- Teachers' perception of PIs for school improvement.
- Performance indicators and teacher motivation.
- Analysis of findings.

## 4.2 Presentation of findings

### 4.2.1 General response to the performance indicators

The following considers the responses from the participants in response to the interview questions asked. Some participants agreed and some did not agree that performance indicators had improved the academic performance of learners in their schools and motivated teachers to work hard. According to T 3 (1):

For me I think the PIs are an important move by the government and I welcome them because these are like guidelines to me that show you the way to go as a teacher because one must have a target in life to know where you are going and how to reach there. So for me these PIs directs me unlike in the previous days where we as teachers used just to plan lessons and using our schemes of work differently from what other colleagues in other schools or other regions are doing but now you will find that what we are doing here in Katima is what teachers in Omusati or Erongo regions are doing, and this is due to these national standards.

T 3 (1) feels that the national standards helped her to evaluate her work in the classroom, as well as what she tests in her learners. She said these standards also add value and quality to her work as she feels that she is on par with other teachers in the whole country. Contrary to T 3 (1), T 5 (1) said she cannot implement the PIs at her school since she does not understand them:

Well, the documents pertaining the national standard are available at schools but we cannot interpret them fully and this seemed to have confused us even more because teachers are complaining that we are being overburdened with things we do not understand.

PRL 1 (1) gave a similar response to T 3 (1), saying that he fully believes that the PIs had benefited them as he feels that there is a lot they had learnt, especially now that schools are in clusters where they are working together and set targets for themselves. Like PRL 1(1), T 1 (1) also viewed the PIs as a good initiative from the government to bring uniformity among schools in terms of performance. He said that the PIs aim to guide schools on what is expected of them as far as teaching and learning is concerned. T 4 (1) and T 2 (1) shared similar sentiments on the

introduction of the PIs saying that PIs have, since their introduction to schools, helped them considerably because:

If this year you scored 45% as we did last year, you will be forced to work hard the following year to get even the average of 50% and this is because you are being forced by your indicator. Every year you will not be comfortable operating under or below your set target so the PIs will remind you.

PRL1 (1) was convinced that should schools work according to these PIs, improvement would be inevitable. PRL 2 (2) felt that the PIs are beneficial since his school has shown a drastic academic improvement since the PIs were introduced. He regards PIs a guide to show them step-by-step how they should implement them. Of utmost importance is the fact that PIs place all schools at the same level, which enables them to learn from each other. He stated that:

In my school, each teacher is able to measure him or herself against these PIs. We all set targets for ourselves while working with those PIs as our directive and finally we reach our targets because it is like competing against something, and it also helps with the general administration of the school.

When asked their views on the introduction of the PIs at their school, T 6 (2) and T 9 (2) felt that PIs were not beneficial to them at their school. They felt PIs are a burden as they came with too much paper work. Teachers are just busy with files that need to be covered to look neat, but are not paying much attention to what the syllabus requires them to do. T 10 (2) said the PIs are helpful when it comes to remedial teaching:

Like now as you were coming to interview me, I was just coming from class to offer a test this is because I am so afraid that if I don't come back in the afternoon I might not complete my syllabus and my colleagues will surpass me.

T 8 (2) felt that since the PIs came, teachers have been motivated to work hard to be on the same level as others. T 7 (2) felt differently about PI implementation, saying that what is important for him as a teacher is just to focus on teaching the subject matter to learners and not necessarily with the aid of the PIs. He says they are not helpful as far as he is concerned:



These PIs are just like smoke-screens, why do we want to keep teachers busy with administrative work like that? A teacher is employed to teach and not administrative work hence the name teacher.

The participant felt that nowadays teachers have become so critical when it comes to paperwork just to impress their supervisors, but coming to the real work they were employed for, nothing is going on. Moreover, he says the government is adopting educational systems that have failed in other countries and they now impose it in Namibia. HO 1 (1) and HO 2 (1) also welcomed the PIs, saying they have been a good 'saviour' at their school because since they started working with them, their school (school 1) have been performing better, both in terms of learner results and administration.

PIs had helped us even with reprimanding of teachers who do not want to take their work seriously because the PIs are directing us on how to handle such a teacher as there are some procedures stated. PIs had also helped most circuits in the country to set uniform exam papers which are on the same level of difficult that means if a learner passes with a distinction in such an exam then it is easy to rate him as the best one in that particular subject.

H.O. 3 (2) and H.O. 4 (2) were also in agreement with their colleagues in school 1, stating that the PI policy had brought good initiative documents such as the Plan of Action for Academic Improvement (PAAI), School self-evaluation (SSE), Teacher self-evaluation (TSE) and the Personal Development Plan (PDP).

These are good documents which can help a school, a teacher to evaluate himself pertaining his work and identify some weaknesses and improve from them. I can confidently say our school is doing quite well because of the performance indicators.

#### **4.3 Teachers' perceptions of PIs for school improvement**

Some of the findings regarding performance indicators for school improvement at the two schools were similar to those of other studies conducted in different locations and at different periods. For example, both schools 1 and 2 had some teachers confessing that PIs had improved their schools' results after implementation. Similarly, a study conducted by Johannes (2009) in the Ohangwena region of Namibia, also found that the PIs policy had to some extent improved schools' results.

However, other findings appear to be unique to either school 1 or school 2. Some teachers felt that the PIs are not improving the school results, nor is it improving the lack of teaching and learning resources and qualified teachers. In these findings, it should be noted that some of the teachers interviewed may be at times supporting the fact that PIs had improved their school's results, while in response to another question the same respondent may say PIs had not motivated them. This should not be seen as contradictory or conflicting, but simply implying that a teacher may be motivated by the PIs to work hard, but may not necessarily feel that they contribute to the school's academic performance or vice versa. The following categories emerged from the analysis of the participants' responses about performance indicators for school improvement in both school 1 and school 2: Quality of the teaching process, suitability to learners' needs, implementing SDP, achievement target setting and full implementation of the PIs.

#### **4.3.1 Quality of the teaching process**

The quality of teaching and learning as one of the components of the PIs should be emphasised as it is the cornerstone of all learning. A well-prepared teacher is one who employs all various strategies and teaching aids when teaching a class. The success of every lesson depends on how prepared the teacher is. However, most teachers in both schools felt that this quality of teaching must be in line with the learning needs of learners. A teacher must be able to explore their environment during lesson presentation and mobilise the knowledge already available to learners:

T2 (1) said, as a professional teacher, I teach my learners by employing various techniques and using my own teaching aids to consolidate my lesson. Moreover, learners are put in their small groups to work out tasks given to them and for me this has helped me a lot to achieve my goal

Some of the strategies used by teachers at both schools for better performance include:

- Range and appropriateness of teaching approaches;
- Teacher's exposition and explanations;
- Teacher-learner dialogue;
- Learner-centred methods;

- Use of available teaching resources.

#### 4.3.2 Suitability to learners' needs

For learners to work hard and pass, the content and the learning environment must be responsive to learners' needs. otherwise some learners, like the slow, visually impaired and the deaf may not be able to benefit all. Therefore, according to T2 (1), the following four factors must be kept in mind before and when teaching commences:

- Pace of learning;
- Relevance to learners' interests and experience;
- Matching teaching to the learning styles of learners;
- Attention to those with special needs.

The PIs policy was introduced in 2006 with the expectation that school performance would improve, especially academically (Ministry of Education, 2012:20). However, looking at the past six years' results (2007-2012), (see table below) respondents had mixed feelings about the impact of the PIs on school performance. Nevertheless, nearly all respondents believed that the PIs have the potential to improve school performance and learner results.

**Table 1: Grade 10 final examination academic performance results for the years 2007 to 2012 for both school 1 and 2 (As obtained from the two schools studied)**

Exam years	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Pass rate % at school 1	56 %	61 %	63,7%	59%	65%	60%
Pass rate % at School 2	50 %	47 %	49%	53%	50%	28%

The table above shows variations in the academic achievement of the two participating schools (school 1 and 2) in Katima Mulilo circuit of the Caprivi region in Namibia. School 1 is located in town with access to better resources, and school 2 is a semi-urban school with limited resources. The performance of the two schools differs. School 1 appears to have been improving since 2007 up to 2012, but with a slight decline in 2010 when they achieved a 59% pass rate. However, school 2 has

since 2007 shown an up-and-down academic performance with the worst results in 2012 when they obtained a 28% pass rate.

When the question, “Do you think the PIs helps you as a teacher to improve the academic performance and the results?” was asked, PRL 2 (2) responded by saying:

Yes, but only to those teachers who are willing to change, because the PIs are a mirror to reflect what you want to achieve. It is the reflection of what you are doing and that what you want to achieve for example, if the PI says I must involve learners’ parents when the learner is weak, then I will.

T 2(1) reacted to the same question by saying, in their school, he feels the PIs have tried to improve the school results because he has been at that school for about nine years and has seen how his school went up and down in terms of results since 2006 when the PIs were introduced.

Since the indicators have been introduced sometimes our school goes up and sometimes it drops in terms of performance so I can say for sure that the pass rate we have been experiencing for few years now is the result of the PIs.

He continued by saying there are many factors that bring about this poor academic performance, citing the shortage of qualified teachers in various subjects and the exodus of many qualified teachers for greener pastures. T 3(1) admitted that she had not seen the benefits that came along with the introduction of these indicators in terms of better results. She argued this by saying:

Honestly I cannot see the difference between then and now because for me this is just a ‘lip service’ from the policy makers because coming back to us (the grassroots) you will find a lot of problems caused by them (PIs).

#### **4.3.3 Implementing the School Development Plan (SDP)**

T 10 (2) also echoed her colleague by adding that indicators have improved their school significantly, because the PIs direct her. For example, teachers had drawn up their School Development Plan (SDP) as a school and finally as an individual teacher. She again drew up her own Personal Development Plan (PDP), which guides her on how she could improve her teaching programmes as a teacher:

So for me the PIs have really helped in the achievement of school academic performance in some schools though in my school, the results have not been so consistent. Since the inception of these PIs, our school had shown a bit of improvement but sometimes it had dropped down but I am happy because all of us as teachers as well as principals have been empowered to use those (PIs) as the measurement.

#### **4.3.4 Achievement target setting**

T 1(1) contended that achievement target setting (which is part of these PIs) helped them to improve academically at their school for the last two years.

We set ourselves higher targets of 70 to 90 per cent and worked towards the realisation of those targets and although we couldn't exactly reach them, at least we achieved a 60 per cent in 2012. (See Table 1)

However, T5 (1) argued that she could really see academic improvement of schools' results in the near future because according to her the PIs are "more of hands-on work" for the teachers. She agreed that the PIs will, in the future, also improve management and leadership of many schools. Similarly, T 7 (2) argued that improved performance is inevitable in schools if "more effort and support on the side of the ministry, and other schools" was invested. He also said that the Regional Education Directorate had put a 65 per cent pass rate this year for the whole region and called upon all principals and teachers to work towards this indicator. He further suggested that for the purpose of academic improvement, "principals could be excluded from staffing norms" especially those that call upon principals to be subject teachers also.

He pointed out that at some schools, you will find principals with a full teaching load, which has a negative effect on their management and leadership roles and thereby making it difficult for them to supervise their staff for the purpose of better results.

#### **4.3.5 Full implementation of the PIs**

PRL 1 (1), along with other respondents argued that school academic performance is possible depending on monitoring and evaluation of our school managers on teachers. He also contended that monitoring, assessment and evaluation are

important PI tools that one finds in the key area 2 of our PIs policy. Concerning curriculum teaching and learning, he said:

We should stop all the excuses about what the PIs had or had not brought, the gist of the whole matter is that we must follow the PIs, they are an initiative from our government to try and rectify whatever we did not do right in the past so to me the PIs have really improved the results at my school in 2011 and 2012 when we scored a 65 percentage in 2011 and a 60 per cent pass rate in 2012 (see table 1).

He attributes the good performance of his school to the successful implementation of these PIs, because he says he and his staff members always measure themselves by using the PI tools and working towards the targets they set for themselves. T 8 (2) recalled that the 2010 results at their school were so much more pleasing than the previous year (see table above). She confidently stated that it was because of how closely teachers monitor learners' work, how school management monitor the work of the teachers and the effort that the regional office had put in place to ensure that all schools implement the PIs to see whether the indicators had yielded good results after seven years of their implementation. It should, however, be clear that monitoring and implementation do not work independently of each other, but complement one another. Whenever there is a strong monitoring on the side of teachers of learners or school managers of teachers, implementation will take place. In every situation where success is needed, there should be some kind of monitoring to ensure that the intended outcome is achieved. According to H.O.1 (1), the PIs improved their school academic performance last year (2012) and he feels that it's because all these years they had been trying to come to terms with these indicators and with how to implement them, but to no avail. But last year, their insistence finally paid off:

As I am speaking to you now, every teacher is so happy and they all say they now understand how the performance indicators works. He stated that schools must not lose hope or be discouraged by the fact that this year they did not do well, they should just continue to implement them (PIs) when they will understand how the whole system works, they will start to like it.

Similarly H.O. 3 (2), when asked whether performance indicators had improved their results since their introduction seven years ago also felt that they really helped them

much at their school. PRL 1 (1) quoted indicator 1 and 2 from the Pls document, which talks about curriculum teaching and learning. She said that these indicators directed their school as to what part of the curriculum to focus on:

Once you focus on what the indicator tells you to do, automatically your learners will pass and I think this is what has helped us to improve last year.

According to T 6 (2) the Pls improved their school performance in terms of the learners' results for 2011, as compared to the 2008 and 2009 results. He argued that the school only dropped in its performance in 2009. Furthermore, he felt the Pls enhanced school improvement because it helped them to look back on how they have been performing, especially before 2011 before the new principal took over the administration of the school.

Before our new principal came, I think we were not so serious with the Pls but when he came, he focused much on implementing the indicators and we did it.

T 9 (2) indicated that there were mixed feelings regarding school performance, saying:

You may wonder why a school might perform very well particularly if we use grade 10 and 12 results that are published nationally. A school could reach 92% this year for example but the following year is at 38% pass rate what is that?

H.O. 2 (1) disagreed with T 9 (2)'s viewpoint, saying that in their school, whether it is academic results or administration, they are getting there and the Pls are the things helping them by showing them what to do.

We are not doing badly, but we are fluctuating between 56% and 65% in terms of learner performance and I attribute that to the performance indicators.

T 4 (1) stressed that schools that were performing well before the introduction of the Pls are still the same schools that are showing an improvement even today. Thus:

I cannot argue for sure that the Pls have improved the performance of schools.

H.O.4 (2) believed the performance indicators have improved some results. He said according to his observations when he was transferred to that school some six years ago, his school ranged from 28 % to 47 % and he was wondering what the problem

might have been, but when they started setting targets for themselves per year as per national standard stipulations, drawing up personal development plans (PDP) per teacher and implementing them, they started to score at least 50% and above.

I believe that if all schools could follow what the PIs are directing us to do, I think our situations would change for better. I want to also say if school A has problems when it comes to implementing and following the PIs, then they must seek support from sister schools or visit their cluster centres for assistance.

#### **4.4 Performance indicators and teacher motivation**

The introduction of the PIs is one of the best policy initiatives in the history of the Namibian government and the Ministry of Education in particular (MoE, 2006:20). Its importance lies in the fact that the standards it demands are aimed at the provision of uniform quality education in all schools in Namibia. If the challenges that are impeding its effective implementation are fully addressed, then there is no doubt that Namibia will be able to reach the national goal of Vision 2030. During this interview, the question was put to all participants to find out their perceptions on whether the PIs motivate them to work hard or not. Again respondents offered differing viewpoints regarding how they experience these PIs in terms of motivation. According to H.O. 1 (1):

Yes they do, if you follow them, you will not have a problem. Myself in particular, I have been motivated to work hard by them. For example if the indicators are saying I should monitor my teachers on learners' written work at least three times per week, whether I like it or not as a manager I am motivated to do so and whatever findings I will have whether negative or positive, I will still make some follow ups until such an activity is rightfully carried out.

He feels that the PIs should not be seen as forcing the issue, but something that encourages one to work so that one can reach one's expectations. T 6 (2), on the other hand, doubts whether PIs do motivate him to work hard by mentioning examples of veteran teachers who he felt do not want to be reminded of their duties as teachers, because they feel they are experienced and do not need PIs to motivate them. There seem to be mixed reactions on how new and veteran teachers react to these PIs given their work experience and the level of technology nowadays in case



of young teachers. However, T6 (2) recognised that there are still some challenges to fully implement the PIs stating that:

Some teachers especially newly trained teachers are difficult to control they don't show much interest in their work in general, all they are interested in is just technology like playing games on their cell phones or playing music on their laptops.

He contends that in the past they used to work hard without any instruments such as the PIs and learners used to pass, but now it is the other way round. T 9 (2) supported the sentiments put forward by H.O. 1 (1) saying that PIs do motivate her because as she teaches her learners during the year, she teaches bearing in mind that she needs to account to the PIs by reviewing whether the PIs really worked for her or not. She continued by saying that the target setting is one of the powerful tools she uses as a subject teacher to work hard to achieve them.

Since I started setting targets for myself when PIs were implemented, I usually make sure I must achieve what I have set for myself otherwise I will always feel that guilty because if I don't achieve it it's like I did not work, so that will keep me trying until I finally win, so for me, they really motivate.

When asked the same question, T 1 (1) also agreed that PIs do motivate him as he had seen himself really excelling when it comes to academic performance because of the PIs. He gave a practical example, saying when he came to this school, learners were not doing well, especially in mathematics. The perception was that it was difficult. He was so disturbed by this connotation, but after so many years of trying to meet his targets by pushing them up every exam, whether learners passed the subject or not, he finally succeeded by achieving a 67% pass rate and was rewarded with a performance certificate for that.

What really motivated me was that each time I tried to reach my target, I was doing so by moving a step further either by a single point or three, so I worked hard to see if I could realise this dream but because of the PIs, I really achieved my goal.

T 5 (1) also came in to confess that PIs do motivate her in her teaching, stating that because of the PIs, she now knows what to include and what not to include in her lesson preparation. She sticks to the basic competencies more than was the case previously. More so, she felt that because of the indicators she now knows how to

employ all strategies in her preparations for the teaching of slow learners. PIs, she said, also taught her to make special provision for learners with special needs like the hard of hearing, deaf, mute and the epileptic ones, something which she said she did not do in the past because she did not know it.

T 6 (2) was in support of what T 5 (1) said. He too felt that previously teachers were just text-book bound and it used to take them a long time completing their syllabuses, because a teacher would just be following the textbook by teaching even the irrelevant topics. But now, with the PIs in place, they are all doing what is expected and in a uniform way so he believes they are really motivated. It should be clear from T 5 (1) and T 2 (1), when they both say PIs are good, they actually mean PIs have motivated them to work hard and that it helped in the improvement of their schools' results. Respondents believe that in the near future when they work hard with the PIs policies and get used to them, they will improve the results of the schools so much more than they are doing now. On the other hand, the issue of indicators motivating teachers to work hard was not so much supported by T 4 (1), nor T 3 (1), since both believed that although the PIs had shown a significant improvement in the academic results at their schools some two years ago, PIs frustrate many teachers in that they are being derailed from the way they are supposed to teach by forcing them to memorise what paperwork instructs them to do. For example,

Apart from my normal teaching periods during the day, I am still expected to do some administrative work in the five files that we are required to have

T 4 (1) and T 3 (1) were in agreement with their colleague when they felt that indicators have become more of a challenge to most teachers:

You will find that most of us when we started teaching, those things (PIs) were not in place and people could just work their way and bringing change now in the environment, teachers will resist

Furthermore, they felt that they are not motivated by the indicators as they view them as a burden on top of their work. They feel it is a challenge to cope with their normal teaching load plus extra administrative work, which they believe was brought by the indicators. H.O. 4 (2), felt that PIs are so motivational, although they came a bit late.

He feels that if they had come immediately after independence while everyone's mind was still fresh, it have been much better because that would have been our first educational initiative as a young country.

We are suggesting for some workshops to be conducted intensively for those struggling teachers to understand, and help us work better, otherwise they are so helpful.

PRL 2 (2), when asked the same question, also confessed that since these PIs were introduced in Namibian schools, they had motivated him and his staff so much. He feels that teachers use it to determine how they are performing and how they can improve, while they (principals) use it to measure teachers' contribution to the school (Lavy, 2007:92). However, the modus operandi of performance measurement would be the same: setting performance standards and then measuring actual performance to see whether these standards have been achieved (or even exceeded). It provides an apparently rational way of determining an individual's performance.

T 8 (2) and PRL 1 (1) both admitted that PIs are good and have motivated both teachers and learners at their school because learners are able to set their own targets or goals on whatever marks they would like to achieve during the examinations or any assessment. Equally, T 10 (2) shared similar sentiments with her colleagues stating that

PIs are a good gesture from government as they accord each and every stakeholder in education an opportunity to actually play a role especially learners. The more they are involved, the easier it becomes for them to work hard and pass.

H.O. 2 (1) and H.O. 3 (2) also felt that PIs have motivated teachers to work hard because this time around, teachers will not just wait to be told by someone in the management, since it is something they can now read and understand for themselves:

I think our role as leaders in schools is to monitor and supervise what our teachers are doing because for me work has become easier for everyone as we can all now read what is expected of us as educators.

T 7 (2) for his part echoed the opinions that were put forward by his colleagues when he too thanked the ministry of education in particular for giving the nation such a participatory learning opportunity where everyone can now work towards what he/she wants to achieve. He linked these PIs to a learner-centred education approach that was introduced after independence and added by saying the two do not work in isolation, but complement each other. He said:

The PIs are so motivational in that at the end of the year one is able to evaluate oneself and say how did I work within the year, where did I go wrong and where do I need to fix if I need to.

He felt that PIs are some kind of an evaluative process for everyone starting with the school head up to the last teacher.

#### **4.5 Analysis of findings**

This section provides links between findings in this study and those in other studies on similar subjects. In addition, it also links the findings to extend theories where such links exist. The purpose of this analysis is to provide further insight into the phenomena of focus in this study (Maswahu, 2012), namely school performance indicators and teacher motivation. The researcher reflected again on the perceptions of the respondents, and provides a theoretical contextualisation of these perceptions so they may be properly understood. The researcher tried to limit his interpretation of the data in an attempt to let it speak for itself (Johannes, 2009). However, as the researcher both collected and analysed the data, some personal intervention was unavoidable. To aid his interpretation, the researcher refers to theories already presented in Chapter Two.

The data suggested mixed feelings on the part of the respondents with regard to the implementation of the performance indicators (PIs). Nearly all the respondents appreciated the PIs and see their value in their schools. They referred to the value of standardisation, the benefit principals gained in terms of their management of schools and the possibility of improving the performance of learners and schools. Responses varied, but most acknowledged the importance of the PIs as a means to standardise the provision of quality education in the country. They acknowledged that the introduction of the PIs is a move in the right direction. They believed that if

fully implemented, these PIs would strengthen the capacity of principals and teachers. Though both principals of the two schools interviewed welcomed the PIs, most teachers in both schools 1 and 2 perceived the PIs as ineffective in their schools depending on the reasons and situations prevailing at their schools, such as additional administrative workloads which they apparently said had been put on teachers because of too much paper work, leaving teachers with very little time for teaching.

The data presented in Chapter 4 revealed certain issues that arise from the implementation of the PIs in Namibian schools. It transpired that principals, heads of department and most teachers interviewed at both schools were positive about the influence of PIs on learners' results, and believe that they are a valuable innovation. However, a few teachers again in both schools 1 and 2 felt that PIs had not contributed in either improving their schools' results or in motivating teachers to work hard. They expressed their disappointment at the ill-preparedness of the implementers during the introduction stage. Furthermore, they felt that, as indicated by Johannes (2009), the support that was promised to aid the implementation of the PIs to teachers has not been forthcoming.

**The discussions in this chapter are organised around the following two sub-topics, which will serve as themes to guide my interpretation:**

- PIs and their potential to improve the academic performance of schools;
- The influence of PIs on teacher motivation.

#### **4.5.1 PIs and their potential to improve the academic performance of schools**

While there could be many other factors responsible for the two schools' academic improvement, most teachers interviewed, especially in school 1, held the view that performance indicators (PIs) have improved the academic performance of their school and have motivated them to work hard. This is so because in school 1, most teachers tried to implement the PIs policy even when they did not fully understand them. They did what is known as 'trial and error' and when the principal and the HODs came to their aid by workshopping them, they had already acquired some basics of how to do it. As for school 2, some of teachers were so keen to try these PIs by themselves, but they waited for assistance from their principal who had

attended a PIs workshop in 2006 when they were introduced. According to T5 (1) and T2 (1), PIs have improved the academic performance of their respective schools because of following instructions which came along with them.

PIs have helped us to improve our school's performance in terms of learners' results especially in 2011 when we tried to set ourselves the performance targets per teacher per subject we really improved. Although we dropped a bit last year, at least we were still in 60 per cent and I attribute this to the PIs that showed us the right way to go.

This view was also supported by T1 (1), who contended that PIs play a pivotal role in improving their school results, especially target setting, which made their school improve academically and the School Development Plan (SDP) and the Plan of Action for Academic Improvement (PAAI) equipped all teachers with the necessary skills to teach and offer remedial support to learners with special needs.

PIs have helped us a lot as a school to teach with stipulations of the PIs and evaluating our work at the same time because this is what the PIs are all about. I want to also thank our Principal because he is also teaching and showing us the right thing to do. When he tells us to work, he is also there to lead and I am sure the PIs will help him in his administration of the school. Everything needs supervision because if left alone, teachers may not do anything.

Performance indicators can really help in improving the schools, as well as motivating teachers to work. It is some form of an external drive or motivation to help each employee in the work place to use as a measurement and not necessarily a control mechanism. They act mainly as a form of accountability, particularly related to a systems approach that incorporates an input-output model. Indicators for school improvement define the elements of whole school improvement that schools can put into effect at the elementary, middle and high school levels in order to produce desired learning results (Jeffrey, 2002). Cloete and Bunting (2004) define an indicator as a measure - usually in a quantitative form of an aspect of an activity of a higher education institution. The measure may be ordinal or cardinal, absolute or comparative. Indicators have a strong purpose in our schools and the education system at large. Fullan (1992:173) felt that "It is only when bottom-up and top-down forces interact and are mediated in purposeful directions that improvement occurs".

H.O1 (1), H.O2 (1), H.O3 (2) and H.O4 (2) all supported the idea that PIs had really improved the academic performance of both schools and motivated them to work hard, not just because they are school managers and are therefore obliged to implement these PIs, but because they are also subject teachers and have seen how their schools had fared well with PIs. The views of the four heads of department at the two schools seem to have been echoed by Akhavan (2004), who also observed that:

Indicators are a place to stand on, a solid foundation on which to build a successful curriculum and literacy program that teaches children in ways that ensure their academic success. Effective indicators are also goals for students to meet in order to be proficient in reading, writing and maths.

H.O3 (2) quoted key areas 1 and 2, saying that these key areas of the PIs are about teaching and learning. They do direct teachers on which area of the curriculum they have to follow and how to teach it.

For me I appreciate this new initiative called the PIs. I say they have improved our school's results although they are fluctuating but one can recall that since their inception, our teaching approaches have changed and this has led to our school results to improve. We all should not be discouraged by the way we are struggling to come to terms with these indicators we should just study and practice what these policies are saying. If we are advised to change the approach in teaching we should follow, then you will find that even our learners will understand and finally they too will change the approach of preparing.

Indicators for school improvement define the elements of whole school improvement that schools can put into effect at the elementary, middle and high school levels in order to produce desired learning results (Jeffrey, 2002). In the modern climate of high-stakes testing and educational accountability, the success of a school is measured by the school's achievement of set performance indicators. Creemers (1995) defines school improvement as all theories and studies concerning strategies for educational change that enhances student outcomes, as well as strengthening the school's capacity for managing change. Hulpia and Valcke (2004) agrees with Creemers by defining school improvement as a dynamic, planned and rational change process with structural and cultural aspects that are planned along

processes of initiation, implementation and institutionalization. It especially centres on changing the conditions of learning and related internal conditions in schools.

#### **4.5.2 The influence of PIs on teacher motivation**

The first step towards improved teacher performance is to motivate teachers by changing their minds, attitudes and understanding to accept these PI policies in order for the implementation stage to take place (Ministry of Education, 2006:5).

Lavy (2007) concurs with the teachers' beliefs that working with PIs and implementing them successfully, will improve the schools' academic performance and richly reward them. Teachers will read the PIs and see them as the reflection of what they, as teachers, are already doing in most cases, hence they are of limited motivational value. Some teachers, especially in school 2, saw performance measurement as a legitimate and impartial managerial tool (serving the interests of everyone in the organisation by exposing free-riding). At other times, they saw performance measurement as intrusive and oppressive, imposed on them by managers who, as agents of employers, use it to serve a narrow set of interests, for example by intensifying work (Graham, 2012:189). T2 (1) also added saying that, the PI policies "are not new things at all, I don't see anything that had been added to my work as a teacher as others feel that it is a burden, rather it is just a supplementary initiative to strengthen what I am already doing as a teacher." T6 (2) in support of a colleague said:

If I evaluate my learners continuously or if I teach by setting some performance targets for myself in my subject, something which I have been doing since I became a teacher, why should I feel motivated about it? Unless I have been teaching in a wrong way and found the right way with the PIs then that is how I can say I have been motivated by the PIs to work hard.

In Namibia, and particularly the Caprivi region, the ministry of education, in an attempt to motivate teachers to work hard, introduced national, regional, circuit, cluster and school-based award-giving programmes aimed at acknowledging individual teachers' achievement through prize-giving or awards, promotion and performance ranking. These award prize-giving ceremonies were part of the performance indicators that were intended to motivate teachers to work hard and



improve results. They are not an outside initiative, but part of the key areas of the PIs. However, not all teachers are motivated by the award-giving ceremonies as a component of the PIs. Those who feel unmotivated may have their own reasons, as Sheya (2011:10) puts it:

Award ceremonies have seen many teachers faking learners' results just to obtain a reward at the end of the year, sacrificing one's own gains in order to limit the gain of others, unwillingness to cooperate and share information with others.

Two teachers in school 1 and one teacher in school 2 felt that it is true that performance indicators brought great dishonesty when it comes to the authenticity of school results in that the marks may have been altered or compromised to favour oneself, just to be recognised with a certificate, while lowering the education standard at the same time. Although monetary rewards are the most common incentive in performance-related pay, other incentives can include reduced teaching load, promotion, and public recognition of outstanding teachers. The reward can be just a one-time event or it can be on-going, leading to a permanent salary increase. It can be based on a relative criterion (for example, the average test score gain of a teacher's class relative to the classes of other teachers).

The majority of the teachers in both schools held a view that PIs, just as they had improved the academic achievement of their schools, also motivated them to work hard.

The only thing we call for from the side of our policy makers is to involve us as stakeholders especially in the drafting stages of the policies in education

T10 (2) said:

I welcome the PIs as a very good motivation for me as a teacher because it is a mirror to see myself through. Whether I perform in my subject or not, they (PIs) should show me. In other words whatever you have at the end of the day in your teaching should be the answer on whether or not you are working hard.

This is in agreement with Johannes (2009), who confirms this by saying:

PIs have a very good progress in as far as motivation for teachers is concerned because they are like guidelines and people stick to them.

The same feeling was shared by Lavy (2007:92), who also feels that:

Teachers use indicators to determine how they are performing and how they can improve.

Uugwanga (2007) states that PIs teaches and motivates teachers to focus on doing one thing at a time. T1 (1) said:

As teachers we are encouraged by indicators to mainly focus on a component or unit of a topic before you continue with others after which you are advised to give a unit task to evaluate learners.

For example, PIs encourage teachers to conduct subject meetings, school clubs at schools and to plan lessons together. More class observations are carried out than before the introduction of the PIs. Furthermore, PIs had taught school managers to check and control teachers' lesson plans every two days, unlike in the past when they did not do it that way (MoE:2005a). People are generally motivated by whatever good things happen to them and teachers are no exception. It is therefore up to the school managers to create conditions that are conducive to teaching and learning. According to H.O.3 (2), indicators require that teachers and school managers check, assess and monitor learners' work four times per week and this has encouraged most teachers to prepare and monitor learners' work on a daily basis. Additionally, PRL 2 (1) added:

There are major changes that have taken place at our school after the PIs were introduced, namely: The writing of annual and term reports and teachers asking for permission when they leave school during working hours by completing a specific permission slip stipulating the time or hours to be spent by such a teacher during his/her absence, which was not happening before the introduction of the PIs.

H.O.2 (1) added that most teachers at both schools started giving feedback to their principals after attending workshops, which shows that PIs had really motivated most teachers to work hard and doing things in a different way. The fact most teachers can now perform their duties without much force is an indication enough that most

teachers are now intrinsically motivated by the PIs. If they are motivated by the PI rules, it means that they can teach better because they are motivated and there will finally be a better academic result. Soretoll and Fink (1996) therefore argue that teacher motivation is anything done to make teachers happy, satisfied, dedicated and committed in such a way that they bring out the best in their places of work so that both students, parents and the society will greatly benefit from their services.

#### **4.6 Summary**

There is no such thing as a reliable study in research. However each and every study can stand out prominently depending on the richness of data collected, the presentation of such findings, as well as the trustworthiness and the authenticity of the sources. This chapter presented the findings of the data collected from two schools. The data covers the views of 2 principals, 4 HoDs and 10 teachers. The researcher tried to strike a balance in his presentation by reporting each respondent's views fairly. The quotations reflect the richness of the respondents' information. Furthermore, it was found that most of the teachers interviewed in the two schools held the view that performance indicators had indeed improved the academic performance of their respective schools, as well as the administration and leadership styles of their school managers. The dictums of the PIs call on all schools to take quality assurance seriously, with particular emphasis on School self-evaluation (SSE) as one of the key performance indicators policy

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND A POSSIBLE WAY FORWARD

### 5.1 Conclusions from the main findings

The study revealed that there is a fundamental understanding of the relevance of the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPIs) for schools in Namibia and in the Caprivi region, in particular among most of the respondents interviewed in both schools. Among the common reasons given by the respondents why they find the PIs to be relevant in school academic performance are the following:

- Their belief that the PIs enable principals to lead and manage their schools well.
- Their belief that the PIs serve to strengthen the principals' role of stakeholder in the running of their school.
- Their belief that the PIs improved the provision of quality education in Namibia.
- Their appreciation of a means by which to evaluate schools and to identify weaknesses, and so to improve school performance.
- Their perception of the strengthening of the management and/or leadership role of principals.

The fact that principals see the importance of the introduction of the PIs as a positive sign is because only when leadership is in support of an innovation can its objectives be realised (Johannes, 2009). Thus, the introduction of any educational initiative must be supported by the principal. This is in line with Westraad (2005:49) who claims that "Projects having the active support of the principal were likely to fare well".

The study reveals that the information provided by schools' target settings, School self-evaluation (SSEs), Teacher self-evaluation, (TSEs), and School Development Plan (SDPs) is not reliable as some teachers in both schools could not thoroughly implement these PIs policies. It should be noted that the above-mentioned four

policies are not general policies, but are part of the PI policies. They are important in that they help every teacher to evaluate him- or herself in terms of academic performance. In case of TSE, it helps every teacher with regard to how he teaches, assesses learners and grades them. Target setting will also assist a teacher and learners to anticipate how much he intends to achieve at the end of each semester in terms of academic improvement. The SDP and the SSE will mainly focus on evaluating the school(s) in terms of both physical and curriculum development of the school.

The introduction of the PIs has to some extent improved the performance of learners in terms of results at both schools. There is already existing evidence that the results of both school 1 and 2 for the past three years have been improving and this is attributed to the serious monitoring and implementation of these PIs. Therefore, the conclusion that must be drawn from this study is that the implementation of the PIs has gradually succeeded in improving the two schools' performance in terms of learners' pass rates and motivating teachers to work hard. There is also a high degree of achievement in both schools in terms of improvement in the administration and leadership roles of principals and HODs, despite the fact that principals and teachers complain about too much administrative work being given to them.

The study also found that some implementers (teachers) at both schools resisted the PIs, saying that they were not consulted during the development stage of the policy. This resistance was caused by a number of factors. For example, teachers see the lack of support from the MoE, in terms of both physical and human resources, as an incapacitating burden placed on them. This is evident when some schools complain that they are without enough resources such as textbooks and writing materials for learners, furniture for learners and teachers.

**In summary the study determined that:**

- There is an understanding that PIs have improved the schools' academic performance in both schools (see chapter 4).
- There is so much interest in PIs from many teachers in both schools, but equally a lack of understanding.
- SDPs, and target settings conducted by both schools almost always helped teachers to have a clear focus on what they intended to achieve.

- Teachers tried to practically implement the PIs policy even if they lacked understanding.
- The disparities in resource distribution in both schools seemed to hamper the full PIs implementation.
- There is a need for continuous training of principals and teachers pertaining to the implementation of the PIs.
- There is a great need for monitoring of the PIs in both schools by the school management.
- Professional support (staff development) at schools is lacking.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

The recommendations below are put forward to suggest possible improvements in our educational change in the Katima Mulilo circuit where the study was carried out. Teachers play an important role in facilitating learning in schools and are expected to support learners in their learning process as well. This is only possible when they are provided with the necessary skills to improve the quality of their input (Arcaro, 1995:56; Wedell, 2009:39). Policy implementers such as school principals should be made aware and understand the PIs as they are the ones tasked with the responsibility of mediating them. Therefore, I recommend intensive training for all principals, heads of department, teachers, and school board members. Fullan (1991) argues that no matter how intensive the pre-implementation training sessions are, they may prove to be futile and their lessons may be discarded during the implementation stage if they are not supplemented by continuous in-service training. There is consequently a need for the education directorate in the region to provide continuous training to principals and teachers.

In addition, principals should conduct monitoring as prescribed in the guidelines for subject management in schools, and should solicit assistance from the inspectors of education (IoEs) and the advisory teachers (ATs) when the need arises. This is because both principals in the two schools visited frequently monitor teachers' and learners' work, and this is why their schools improved. Therefore this recommendation is there to encourage similar actions from some principals in other schools.

This study also reveals that both schools visited are under-resourced with regard to teaching-learning materials such as textbooks and thus making it difficult for the PIs to be successfully implemented. For example, principals and HODs in both schools find it difficult to observe their teachers in the classroom because most learners share textbooks, and this makes it hard for a teacher to present a lesson in a learner-centred way. It is therefore recommended that the Caprivi educational directorate should make more funds available for textbook purchases. Furthermore, this study recommends the liaison of the two schools visited with other sister schools in the region to learn from each other. Teachers should also become more professional and innovative enough to supplement where the ministry cannot afford to fund.

### **5.3 Suggestions for future research**

Performance indicators of the national standards are of paramount importance to the Namibian education system. As such, in order to have a broader understanding of how these PIs can improve the schools results, more research by academics is needed. In addition, further research would enable a better conclusion on whether or not the PIs can improve the academic performance of learners in schools and motivate teachers to work hard, further research needs to be done in this area. It is also recommended that further research must be done to ascertain how schools do their lesson observation and monitoring and why this is important. A further analysis of what motivates some teachers to work hard must also be investigated.

### **5.4 Significance of the study**

As an HOD in Katima circuit myself, this research provided me with a sense of teachers' perceptions of the relevance of performance indicators in school improvement. The researcher is now able to understand the teachers' experiences and challenges of trying to implement the PIs in their schools.

This research is useful in the entire region because its findings can be used to improve the implementation of the PIs and other policies yet to come. The Caprivi regional office could use this research to strengthen their support of principals and teachers in their respective schools and circuits to improve on academic performance. So far, this has not been done properly. The following is still needed:

- Providing continuous training of school leadership on educational matters;
- Encouraging teachers to adapt and embrace change, especially change that comes as an educational initiative;
- Identifying the key PIs that need urgent attention and those that need to be reworked;
- Explaining the importance of incorporating the PIs in the teaching-learning situations.

As educational policies are an important and an on-going process, the Regional Office could use the findings of this study to strengthen the capacity of the two schools' leadership and management in the whole region. The ministry of education (MoE) may also benefit from the recommendations of this study when designing future policies. For example, offering intensive training to implementers before the implementation stage of any innovation. Finally, the research may also contribute to the field of leadership in policy implementation in institutions of higher learning (Johannes, 2009).

### **5.5 Limitations of the study**

This study was limited to two secondary schools only, as resources (money and transport) were not available to include more than two schools. More so, the time available was too limited to include more schools. The study generated a deep understanding of performance indicators in school improvement in the two schools, which would not have been generated through quantitative methods. However, as a qualitative study, the study was limited to a small sample, which means the findings are not generalisable because they relate mainly to the participants' experiences and views about the relevance of the PIs in improving the school academic results phenomena within their own unique contexts.

One other possible limitations of this study could be that my position as a head of department in the Katima Mulilo circuit where the study was carried out might have influenced the responses of my interviewees. Another possibility was that, as an outsider working at a different school, my age and status might also have influenced the way respondents answered questions. The exclusion of some stakeholders from the research in the two schools, such as parents, learners themselves due to the



narrow focus of the research also 'closed off' those differing viewpoints. The unwelcoming response of some staff members at both schools might also have influenced the way the entire research process was conducted, as well as the trustworthiness of the responses. It is also very possible that responses were given that are not representative of the true situation. However, the fact that this research was not conducted at the school where the researcher is employed, strengthens the validity of the study. The result of this study gives a general picture of teachers' perceptions of the relevance of performance indicators in school improvement and development in Namibia.

## **5.6 Summary**

The importance of performance indicators in the Namibian schools is of vital importance in that the standards they demand are aimed at providing a uniform quality education in all schools countrywide. As key players in the teaching-learning situation, teachers should work hard in the realisation of making their schools centres of academic excellence and guarding against any factor(s) that may hinder academic performance. This study was embarked on to gain a deeper understanding of how performance indicators, if thoroughly implemented, lead to school's academic improvement. The study further showed that, on the one hand some factors (PIs) were linked to school improvement and development in the two schools studied, and on the other hand, there are not many such links. This therefore calls for an exploration by further studies to generate new theories to better explain such findings.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Interview questions for Principals, H.O.Ds and Teachers

Interviewer: I would like to start by thanking you for agreeing to be part and parcel of this interview. This is just an academic paper, it is anonymous and you are assured of anonymity and confidentiality of all our discussions. Allow me to now begin with our interview:

1. In your own words, how would you define or describe the terms “school improvement and development”? Explain in a more detail.
2. What do you understand by what performance indicators are? Do you know of any, give examples of such indicators
3. Why do we have these PIs, who developed them, is it necessary to have them, why?
4. How can you prove that you are doing what you are doing currently because the PIs are so motivating or demotivating?
5. What relationship (if any) exists between PIs and school improvement?
6. Are Indicators fair and/or acceptable according to your perceptions?
7. Do the indicators motivate you to improve and develop the quality of education and improve results? Why is it motivational or not, how does it motivate you. Explain a bit more on that



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## **Appendix: B Ethical clearance certificate**

### **Approval Notice**

#### **New Application**

17-Apr-2013

MAEMEKO, Eugene Litaba

Dear Mr Eugene MAEMEKO,

**Protocol #: DESC\_Maemeko2013**

**Title: The teachers' perception of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in Namibia.**

Protocol Approval Period: **16-Apr-2013 -15-Apr-2014**

The **New Application** received on **10-Apr-2013**, was reviewed by members of **Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)** via Expedited review procedures on **16-Apr-2013** and was approved. Please note the following information about your approved research protocol:

#### **Standard provisions**

1. The researcher will remain within the procedures and protocols indicated in the proposal, particularly in terms of any undertakings made in terms of the confidentiality of the information gathered.
2. The research will again be submitted for ethical clearance if there is any substantial departure from the existing proposal.

3. The researcher will remain within the parameters of any applicable national legislation, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of research.
4. The researcher will consider and implement the foregoing suggestions to lower the ethical risk associated with the research.

You may commence with your research with strict adherence to the abovementioned provisions and stipulations. Please remember to use your **protocol number (DESC\_Maemeko2013)** on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your research protocol. Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

#### **After Ethical Review:**

Please note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a continuation is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit. National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) number REC-050411-032. This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki, the South African Medical Research Council Guidelines as well as the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health).

#### **Provincial and City of Cape Town Approval**

Please note that for research at a primary or secondary healthcare facility permission must be obtained from the relevant authorities (Western Cape Department of Health and/or City Health) to conduct the research as stated in the protocol. Contact persons are Ms Claudette Abrahams at Western Cape Department of Health ([healthres@pgwc.gov.za](mailto:healthres@pgwc.gov.za) Tel: +27 21 483 9907) and Dr Helene Visser at City Health ([Helene.Visser@capetown.gov.za](mailto:Helene.Visser@capetown.gov.za) Tel: +27 21 400 3981). Research that will be conducted at any tertiary academic institution requires approval from the relevant parties. For approvals from the Western Cape Education Department, contact Dr AT Wyngaard ([awyngaar@pgwc.gov.za](mailto:awyngaar@pgwc.gov.za), Tel: 0214769272, Fax: 0865902282, <http://wced.wcape.gov.za>). Institutional permission from academic institutions for students, staff & alumni. This institutional permission should be obtained before submitting an application for

ethics clearance to the REC. Please note that informed consent from participants can only be obtained after ethics approval has been granted. It is your responsibility as researcher to keep signed informed consent forms for inspection for the duration of the research.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research. If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at 0218089183. **Included Documents:** Sincerely, Susara Oberholzer REC Coordinator Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities).

## **Appendix C: Request to conduct research in schools (To Director).**

University of Stellenbosch

Private Bag X1

Matieland

South Africa

15 April 2013

The Regional Director

Caprivi Education Region

Private Bag 5006

Katima Mulilo

Namibia

Dear Sir

### **Request for permission to visit schools in the Katima Mulilo Circuit for research purposes**

I am writing to request permission to study two secondary schools in the Katima Mulilo Circuit for my research during May and June 2013. The secondary schools I wish to visit are Ngweze Senior Secondary School and Mafuta Combined School.

The objective of my study is to investigate **Teachers' perception on the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in**

**Namibia.** I would like to investigate the role of performance indicators for school improvement phenomenon in both rural and urban school settings so as to gain a deeper understanding of the issue within these contexts. The study will include interviews with the schools' principals, Heads of departments (HODs) and teachers. These will have to be interviewed in order to gain their perceptions, views and opinions about the issue under investigation.

In this study I wish to answer the following research questions:

**What are teachers' perception of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in Namibia?**

The key sub questions are:

1. Are the indicators and standards realistic according to the teacher's perceptions?
2. Do the indicators motivate teachers to improve or develop?
3. Do teachers experience it that the indicators assist them to improve or develop?

I hope this study will also be of benefit to both the target schools and the Education Directorate as it will help discover some of the problems that might have not been identified by these education stakeholders in relation to the school improvement phenomenon. I will therefore share my findings with all of the above.

I thank you in advance for your understanding in this matter.

Yours faithfully

---

Mr E.L. Maemeko



## Appendix D: Response letter from the Education Director

	<b>Republic of Namibia Caprivi Regional Council Directorate of Education</b>	
Enquiries: Mr. A M Samupwa File No: _____		Tel: 066 253002/253210 Fax: 066 253187
 <b>23 January 2013</b>		
 University of Stellenbosch Private Bag X1 Matieland South Africa  Attention: Mr E L Maemeko		
 <b>RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS: CAPRIVI REGION</b>		
 Your letter dated 23 January 2013 requesting for permission to conduct research as per above has reference.		
 Permission is hereby granted to you to visit schools within the region to conduct research as per your programme. However, be advised that such granted permission should not disrupt the normal teaching and learning activities at those schools you intend visiting.		
 It will be highly appreciated if you would share your findings with the Ministry.		
 Thank you,  <b>MR A M SAMUPWA ACTING REGIONAL DIRECTOR</b>		
 1 _____ <i>All official correspondence must be addressed to the Chief Regional Officer</i>		

## Appendix E: Request letter to the Principal for school (A)

University of Stellenbosch

Private Bag X1

Matieland

South Africa

15 April 2013

The School Principal

Ngweze Senior Secondary School

Dear Sir

### **Re: Permission to carry out a study at your school**

I write to request permission to carry out a study at your school in May or June 2013. The title of the study is to find out **Teachers' perception of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development of the Katima Mulilo Circuit of the Caprivi Education Region of Namibia**". It is a M.Ed. study with the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa. With this study I wish to investigate the perception of teachers on the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in the Katima Mulilo Circuit.

This selected school will be referred to as school A. You are therefore assured of anonymity and confidentiality in this regard. The study will involve interviews with the schools' principals, two Heads of department (HODs) and five teachers. Semi-structured interview questions have been prepared for all the participants. These interviews will take place during break or any other time you may suggest to avoid disruption of your normal daily routine of activities.

An investigation of this matter will contribute towards improved Education for All. You are thus humbly requested to participate in this study so that we may together gain a better understanding of the issue under focus.


I look forward to working with you in this study.

Yours faithfully

---

Mr E.L. Maemeko

## Appendix F: Response letter from Principal for school (A)

 **NGWEZE SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL**  
Private Bag 1026, Katima Mulilo, NAMIBIA  
Enquiries : A.S. Simasiku Tel; +264 66 253293  
Fax; +264 66 252691

31/01/2013

TO: Mr. Maemeko  
University of Stellenbosch

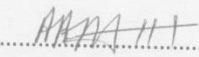
Dear Sir


**RE: CARRY OUT STUDY**

I am writing to inform you that your permission to carry out study on your "Topic perceptions of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development of the Katima Mulilo circuit of the Caprivi Education Region of Namibia" has been granted.

Simply make a turn to our school well in advance when your convenient time arises.

Thank you

  
Mr. Alfea Mutimani  
Acting Principal



## Appendix G: Permission letter to the Principal for school (B)

University of Stellenbosch

Private Bag

Matieland X1

South Africa

15 April 2013

The School Principal

Mafuta Combined School

Dear Sir

### **Re: Permission to carry out a study at your school**

I write to request permission to carry out a study at your school in May and June 2013. The title of the study is to find out **Teachers' perception of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development of the Katima Mulilo Circuit of the Caprivi Education Region of Namibia**". It is a M.Ed. study with the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa. With this study I wish to investigate the perception of teachers on the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in the Katima Mulilo circuit.

This selected school will be referred to as school B. You are therefore assured of anonymity and confidentiality in this regard. The study will involve interviews with the

schools' principals, two Heads of department (HODs) and five teachers. Semi-structured interview questions have been prepared for all the participants. These interviews will take place during break or any other time you may suggest to avoid disruption of your normal daily routine of activities.

An investigation of this matter will contribute towards improved Education for All. You are thus humbly requested to participate in this study so that we may together gain a better understanding of the issue under focus.

I look forward to working with you in this study.

Yours faithfully

---

Mr E.L. Maemeko

## Appendix H: Response letter from Principal for school (B)

	<h1>MAFUTA COMBINED SCHOOL</h1> <p>P.O.Box 958, Ngweze, Katima Mulilo, Tel: +264 66 252813</p>	 REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
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8 April 2013

University of Stellenbosch  
Private Bag XI  
Matie Land  
South Africa

**ATTENTION: MR. E.L. MAEMEKO**

RE: Permission to conduct research at Mafuta Combined School.

Your letter dated 08 February 2013 requesting for permission to conduct a research at the above mention school has a reference.

Permission was granted to you to visit our school in order to conduct your research as per your programme. However, we are so happy that the normal teaching and learning was not disrupted, since all your activities took place in the afternoon.

Counting on your usual support.

Yours faithfully

  
.....  
C.M. Simasiku (Mr.)  
  
PRINCIPAL





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### **Appendix I: Consent form for minors to participate in a research study**

I..... (father/mother/guardian) of .....  
(name of minor) authorise the service of my child to act as a subject in the study entitled: Teachers' perception of the relevance of performance indicators for school improvement and development in one rural and one urban secondary school in the Katima Mulilo circuit of the Caprivi education region of Namibia.

The nature and general purpose of the study and all the possible risks have been explained to me. I understand that ..... (name of minor) will also be given an explanation of the research study and that he/she may decline to serve. I further understand that he/she may terminate his/her service in this research study at any time he/she desires.

I also indemnify and hold harmless the researcher, the University of Stellenbosch and its employees from any and all liability, actions or causes of actions that may accrue to the subject minor as a result of his/her activities for which this consent is granted.

Witness .....

Signature of parent/guardian.....

Date .....

[**Note:** All the information that will be provided to the researcher will be kept confidential and anonymous as much as possible.]